

A COLLEGE TEXT-BOOK OF  
INDIAN HISTORY

VOLUME I

DOWN TO A D 1200

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292 THE ESPLANADE, MADRAS

1940

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY

#### SECTION I THE GEOGRAPHICAL FACTOR

##### **Geography, a partial explanation of History.**

The physical environment is an important factor in human evolution, but its influence has been largely overcome by the astounding progress of man's mental activity. Still the conquest of Nature by Science has its limitations, and even today the geographical factor is not negligible. The raw materials of commerce can be created only to some extent, and mineral resources are discovered not invented. To the extent that the geographical features of a country cannot be modified, human action is conditioned by them. Therefore Geography and Topography, or local Geography, are auxiliary studies to the historian and to the makers of history. Kalhana, the historian of Kashmir, and Sivaji, the father of Maratha nationalism, were experts in Topography and Geography. The term history refers not only to the recorded events, but also to the chronicle of events. Anthropogeography, or human Geography, is the study of the influence of geographical factors on human behaviour. History is, no doubt, modified by such factors, but non geographical forces are more vital to the historical process. Though the racial element is to some extent the off spring of accumulated geographical influences its separateness from the geographical element is generally recognised. It is a factor frequently hard to analyse. The exaggerations of racial theorists obscure the truth they seek after. Besides geographical and racial factors there is a third factor which may be called broadly, social. Its operation may be local, national or international. Our activity is now and then stimulated or repressed by the conduct of other peoples. In other words, we arrive at the apparently redundant dictum that history is influenced by history. A conspicuous case in point is the renaissance of the Orient today, influenced not only by the long standing

imperialism of the West but also by the amazing ascent of Japan to power in this century

**India, the Asiatic Italy** India has been called the Asiatic Italy. Geographically the comparison is not inappropriate. The Himalayas correspond to the Alps and in both countries the North West frontier is more vulnerable than the North East frontier. Father Po and Mother Ganges have caused the fecundity of the great plains and made them the prey of foreign peoples. In one sense the history of Italy and India is the story of their ravishers. Though the configuration of the Apennines and the Vindhya's is different continental and peninsular divisions have resulted in both cases. The eastern river basins of South India are analogous to the plains of Etruria Latium and Campania. The broken coast from Cumae to Tarentum is somewhat similar to the Malabar and Coromandel coasts. Ceylon is our Sicily. Italy and India occupy a middle position in the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean respectively and the Tuscan and Adriatic Seas remind us of the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal. Both countries are largely agricultural and have in the course of ages frequently recovered rapidly from the bites of the dogs of war and pestilence. Both have been pre dominantly continental powers the naval arm in either case growing artificially to meet emergencies. Italy has been the torch bearer of European civilization and India the beacon light of Asiatic culture. But there has been no Indian Rome occupying a central position and radiating its influence at home and abroad. Though Vijayanagar was called the Indian Rome by a foreign observer of the 16th century A D its ascendancy was confined to a part of India and its influence was not as extensive and far reaching as that of ancient Rome.

**Mountains** The Himalayas shelter India not only from the North winds but also from invaders directly from the North. They modify the climate of Northern India and constitute an insuperable barrier to intercourse with China from which our country is isolated on the land side. They give life to the three great rivers and supply us with many articles of consumption. Their inaccessible heights now

stimulate the ambition of man to conquer them but for ages they have had no such effect they have only provided a home for Siva and Parvati. The Himalayan states have lived in a condition of separateness and stagnation. Kashmir alone playing a great part in the annals of culture and a limited role in imperial politics. The Vindhya's have practically separated South India from the North and acted as a barrier to a great extent to close relations between the two fundamental geographical divisions of this country. The overflow of Northern and Southern imperialism on either side has been exceptional and short lived. South India has consequently obtained comparative immunity from the storms overwhelming Northern India. The Western and Eastern Ghats enclose the triangular plateau and demarcate it clearly from the narrow West Coast and the broad East Coast. The slope of the plateau from the West to the East has determined the direction of the rivers and given rise to the great deltas of the East Coast. The mountains and impenetrable forests have contributed to the variety of cultural levels in India. Though they have provided us with some materials for imperial and intellectual progress they have directly acted in a contrary direction.

**Rivers and Plains** The growth of civilization in riverine regions is characteristic of Indian History. The river Sindhu (Indus) has given its name to the Hindus (a variant of Sindhus) and to the province of Sindh. A people battling with Nature for the satisfaction of their creature comforts cannot rise high in civilization. A comfortable life of leisure enables man to think of the problems of life other than those of mere existence. Therefore good life is possible only in rich or imperial states. The productivity of extensive plains watered by large rivers or of the alluvial deltas of rivers stimulates the progress of political integration and of culture. Accordingly the Indo-Gangetic plain has been the great imperial and intellectual centre throughout our history. In the South the Mahanadi, Godavari, Krishna, Kaveri, Vaigai and Tamraparni deltas have played a conspicuous part in history. The less extensive plains of the West Coast nourished comparatively petty princes. The Maratha dominion in the 17th and 18th

centuries A D, founded on inadequate inherent resources, had to be fed with plunder. The plain regions alone can bear the cost of empire and civilization. But while they advance material prosperity and acculturation they are inimical to republicanism and local autonomy. The Sakya mountain republic produced the Buddha, the great democrat of the 6th century B C, but gradually the monarchical states, built on rich foundations, killed the republican tradition, just as the great city states of ancient Greece were overthrown by the territorial monarchy of Macedonia under Philip II and Alexander the Great. The political value of rivers as boundaries and their commercial importance in proportion to their navigability cannot be overlooked. The Krishna Tungabhadra frontier played an important part in ancient and mediæval Indian History. The great capitals of famous dynasties—Pataliputra, Kanauj, Delhi, Ranchi, Tanjore, Uraiyur and Madura—are situated in the plains, the conspicuous exception being Vijayanagar. The great Indian desert added to the defensive resources of Northern India and, to some extent, separated the Indus valley from the rest of the country.

**Coasts and Climate** The coast line of India is comparatively unbroken, and indigenous naval powers have been few and far between, in spite of continuous sea borne trade with foreign countries, the great exceptions being the Cholas, the Cheras, and to a limited extent, the Marathas. Though climate is the resultant of a variety of factors, its elevation to the rank of the sole great geographical factor is hard to appreciate, and the partial geographical explanation of history becomes still more partial owing to the intrusion of climatological monism. The tropical climate of India is prejudicial to sustained effort, but such an effort can bear hard only on the people of other climes. The ferocious invaders of India were tamed by the tropical sun, but their degeneracy in due course was largely due to other factors. India, on the eve of her great failure towards the close of the 12th century A D, was not lacking in virility or heroism. In other words, the climatic effects can be modified to a great extent by intelligent human action. Our indifference to politics and our limited essays in constitutional liberty are explained

sometimes with reference to our climate. Some would attribute our great achievements in many fields to our grand geographical features. But our triumphs as well as our blunders are truly Himalayan, and emphasis on such superficial correlations serves no serious purpose.

## SECTION II RACIAL AND LINGUISTIC UNITS

**Theory of Seven Physical Types.** Seven physical types have been distinguished among the people of India today, and the picture presented is that of an ethnological museum. Indo-Aryan in Kashmir, the Panjab and Rajputana, Dravidian in Madras, Haidarabad, the Central Provinces, Chota Nagpur and Central India, Mongolian in Burma, Nepal and Assam, Aryo-Dravidian in the United Provinces and Bihar, Mongolo-Dravidian in Bengal and Orissa, Scytho-Dravidian in Maharashtra, and Turko-Iranian in Baluchistan and North West borderland. This classification is based on careful measurements of the head and nose and on physical characters like stature and pigmentation. It shows the effects of the foreign invasions of India in making her people composite, and throws light on the past in the light of the present. But it is a rough scheme indicative merely of the predominant element in each type. The names of the types have been suggested by certain speculative views on racial origins. The term Dravidian is regarded as a damned heritage of ethnology from philology, and objection is taken to the dictum that language is a test of race. Though the argument from language to race is not necessarily valid, to say that it is necessarily invalid is untenable. The word Dravidian is another form of the word Tamil, applied to the linguistic family consisting of Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and a few other languages. This conception of linguistic unity has given rise to the idea of the racial unity of those speaking the above-mentioned languages. Further, the alleged Scythian and Mongolian elements in the racial composition of the Marathas and the Bengalis respectively have been called in question. Moreover, the classification under survey says nothing about the pre-Dravidian and proto-Dravidian elements so much emphasised in recent research. Some doubt the stability of physical characters and draw pointed

the artificial constriction of the hip and the flattening of the nose practised by some peoples. But physical characters like head formation are comparatively stable and form the basis for anthropometrical study. Therefore it is going too far to reject that basis and deny the composite character of the Indian population. Broadly speaking, three elements may be recognised: pre-Dravidian, represented by the hill and forest tribes; Dravidian, the common type; and Indo-Aryan, the fair type.

**Aryan and Dravidian Languages.** The three chief linguistic families of India are Aryan, Dravidian and Munda, the last principally in Orissa. South Indian languages including Gond but excluding Marathi, along with Brahui of Baluchistan, belong to the second family. Sanskrit and the vernaculars of Northern India together with Marathi come under the first designation. This linguistic differentiation supports the theory of Dravidian and Aryan invasions of India. The general tendency of scholars is to regard the Dravidians, not as autochthons or children of the soil, but as foreigners, probably of the Mediterranean race, who came to this country about the beginning of the New Stone Age\*.

### SECTION III PERIODS OF INDIAN HISTORY

**Conventional Periods.** The conventional division of Indian History into the Hindu, Muslim and British periods is criticised as superficial, and unsatisfactory. But the principle of calling a historical period after the name of the paramount power is convenient and reasonable, provided the limitations of the label are understood. The Hindu period may be brought to a close, not with the Arab conquest of Sindh or with the innumerable raids and limited Indian conquests of Mahmud of Ghazni, but with the final success of Muhammad of Ghor in the last decade of the 12th century A. D. The practical end of the Muslim period synchronised with the crowning triumph of the Marathas over Aurangzeb about 1700. Though the 18th century witnessed the phenomenal ascendancy of the Marathas which continued till 1772, that

\* V. Rangaiah: *History of Pre-Muslim India*, I (1929), pp. 69-89.



century closed with the assertion of British supremacy by Wellesley, and may be regarded in a sense as that of the British, seeing that the amalgamation of their East India Companies into a United Company in 1708 was the starting point of their effective progress in India. Just as the Muslim period did not really begin with the Arab intrusion into Sindh, the British period did not start with the foundation of their East India Company in 1600. In South India, the Muslim period which commenced a century later than in Northern India, has a different significance, the empire of Vijayanagar and the rise of the Marathas substantially modified the ascendancy of Islam. In a sense, there was no Muhammadan period in South Indian History. In spite of the limitations of the triple division of Indian History into the Hindu, Muhammadan and British periods, it is the best available.

**Another Division.** The significance of the division into Ancient, Mediaeval and Modern for European History is evident, the 5th century A D closing the epoch of classical antiquity and ushering in a period of comparative stagnation and darkness which was ended by the new intellectual forces of the 16th century. It is profitless to adopt the same limits for the Ancient, Mediaeval and Modern periods of Indian History. There is much difference of opinion among scholars as to the lower limit of the first period, 100, 300, 600, 647, 900 and 1200 A D have been adopted by different writers. As characteristic changes in Indian life should constitute the basis of the division, the establishment of the Muslim power in India may be regarded as marking off the Ancient from the Mediaeval period, and that of the British authority, the Mediaeval from the Modern period. Thus, if the division into periods is made on the lines indicated above, it is in general agreement with the conventional triple division. Therefore we may divide Indian History into three periods as follows: the first down to 1200 A D, the second from 1200 to 1700, and the third from 1700 to the present day.

**Sub-Periods.** The sub-division of each period presents difficulties, to base it on a century, three centuries or

five centuries, undivorced from historical considerations, is to some extent desirable. To separate the history of Northern India from that of the South is in a certain degree necessary. To divide Indian History into three parts—Northern India, the Dakhan and the Far South—is not quite satisfactory, because of the substantial unity of South Indian History. Some would distinguish the Dakhan from South India and take the latter as identical with the Tamil country. But the term Dakhan, short for the Greek corruption of *Dakshinapatha*, may be taken as analogous to *Uttarapatha*, applied to Northern India, distinct from *Uttara* beyond the Himalayas. Still it is better to regard South India as identical with Peninsular India or *cis* Vindhyan India, consisting of the Maratha, Telugu, Kannada, Tamil and Malayalam areas, while retaining the conventional denotation of the Dakhan.

#### SECTION IV. ANNALS OF POLITICS AND CULTURE

We are far from the days of Freeman when history could be looked at from the purely political point of view. Yet the Thucydidean tradition dies hard. To make history co-extensive with human life in all its aspects is to increase its scope to an embarrassing extent. Still a general history of India should give sufficient attention to the various sides of human activity, political, religious, economic, social and intellectual. Its dominant note, however, has to be political, though in order to understand the activity of the state in war and peace, its influence on life as a whole is to be appraised, as well as the variety of influences exerted upon it. In the case of men of letters, their influence on government is markedly less than their subordination to its influence. Further, in general histories the annals of culture usually degenerate into a catalogue of authors, books and buildings. Therefore the blend of the histories of politics and culture should not destroy the interest of the former or the distinctness of the picture of the latter. Instead of making the annals of culture complete and dry as dust, it is better to concentrate on major items and greater luminaries. To dissociate cultural progress from dynastic and chronological history is to overlook its historical setting. Some detest political history as bloody, ugly and unedifying and expatiate on the beauty of social and cultural annals.

But life is one and indivisible and human character does not exhibit itself differently in different compartments of life. We cannot afford to overlook the dictum of Kautilya the author of the famous *Arthashastra* that vital cultural progress and healthy social life depend fundamentally on political advance.

## SECTION V SOME MISCONCEPTIONS

**The Matsya and Sundopasunda Nyayas** *Matsya nyaya* or the rule of the fish—the big swallowing the small—is said to be the characteristic of Indian History. Kautilya regards it as the result of the lack of governance characteristic of the supposed pre political stage of human society. The same rule prevailed in the field of inter state relations as well. Political integration on imperial lines would operate as *matsyan jaya*. The holiness ascribed to *digvijayas* (conquests of the world) could not conceal their unscrupulous pursuit. Similarly the *Sundopasundanyaya* or the rule of Sunda and Upasunda (two Rakshasa brothers fighting unto death—war of attrition) operated and resulted in mutual slaughter and exhaustion from the Mahabharata war to the conquest of India by Islam. But the rule of the bully and of Kilkenny cats is of universal application and the misconception in question consists in seeking for its special application in Indian History. Nor was anarchy introduced in consequence of such conflicts. Every schoolboy knows that India is as large as Europe minus Russia and if Indian History is the history of anarchical autonomy till the Muslim advent European History may be described in the same terms and ancient Greek History would be the history of anarchy *par excellence*. The world is now a whispering gallery and thinking internationally is the fashion of the day but in ancient and mediaeval times communal local and provincial patriotism was hard to conquer. It is improper to treat the sub continent of India as a single political unit and describe its division into a number of political units as a sign of degeneracy or political debility. The establishment of the *Pax Indica* by the Mauryas is an astonishing performance regard being had to the extent of their empire and the efficiency of its administrative system. Some dismiss our

provincial history as of purely local importance. True, from the all India point of view but not if we take into consideration the extent of territory or the numerical strength of the population concerned. European History treated on the same lines would dwindle into the history of Caesarism or Napoleonism.

**The Unity of India.** In spite of the existence of many political units and their ruinous clashes, the real unity of India—her cultural homogeneity—has been built up in the course of ages. Indian empires have been of the hegemony type, and the unity of India as a whole till recently has not been political and administrative. The caste system cuts at the root of social solidarity. The racial and linguistic differences, though greatly exaggerated, are real. The forest of faiths called Hinduism is not a centripetal force to any large extent. The remarkable unity of India is due to the common outlook of her people on life and to their common heritage. This essential unity belies the conception of anarchical autonomy which is further refuted by the grand certificates of merit awarded to Indians by foreigners from Megasthenes to Sir Thomas Munro. It is futile to apply to our ancient annals Gibbon's one-sided definition of history as "a register of the crimes, follies and misfortunes of mankind."

**The "Kritayuga" Mentality.** Another series of misconceptions arises from the human tendency to exalt the past and belittle the present. The less we know about the past, the more we draw from our imagination, and historians usurp the function of the makers of history. We are too critical with regard to our contemporaries and under-critical or uncritical about the distant past. The benefit of the doubt is given to antiquity with a vengeance, and frequently no news is understood as good news. Moreover, religion intervenes, and there is nothing that is not religious from the Indian point of view. Even Kautilya is fully vindicated, and his partial condemnation is resented as an undeserved attack on a great *Sastrakara*, some scholars dilating on the conformity of the *Arthashastra* to the *Dharmashastra*, because the word *moksha* or salvation is mouthed by the *Arthashastrakara*. When we come to our triad of Acharyas, it is regarded as

impertinent to criticise them from the historical point of view. The result of this attitude towards our ancients is that we become *praisastikaras* or panegyrists soaked in double-distilled piety. Polybius the Greek historian of ancient Rome lays down the dictum that 'to admit the possibility of a miracle is to annihilate the possibility of history'. The historical method is the rational method applied to the determination of human probabilities and the historian can regard documents like the *Vedas* only as human records and the great *Rishis* or saints and the famous *Bhashyakaras* or commentators only as men though of the extraordinary type. To regard them as impeccable and divine is to abdicate the function of the historian. The other side of the medal cannot be overlooked by the critical student of history who should bear in mind the saying of a famous Western historian that he was a historian first a Christian next.

## SECTION VI SOURCES AND CHRONOLOGY

**Character of the Sources** The authorities for the three periods of Indian History are different in character and extent and for the period prior to the advent of Islam which produced a bumper crop of genuine historical literature the task of the historian is difficult as he is confronted with the paucity of historical raw materials and sometimes he has to hunt for a pin in the hay stack. The sources of Indian History down to 1200 A D are much more varied than for the subsequent periods and a collation of diverse authorities is necessary for portraying a picture frequently fragmentary. Further the sources are in many languages and scripts Indian and non Indian. Therefore the historian of Pre Muslim India is faced with peculiar difficulties he has to be a multi linguist proficient in textual criticism and a specialist in Epigraphy Numismatics and other allied subjects. The distance between Vedic Sanskrit and Classical Sanskrit is greater than that between Chaucer's English and Shakespeare's. The Prakrits are numerous and Pali is their literary form. Tamil has an ancient grammar and literature. Foreign literature is chiefly in Greek Latin Tibetan Chinese and Arabic. With the later evolution of the vernaculars

other than Tamil, the field of the historian becomes much enlarged

**Classification** The multifarious authorities may be divided primarily into indigenous and foreign with their distinctive merits and shortcomings. The indigenous authors generally write with full knowledge born of their contact with the country and the makers of its history, but sometimes give one sided and distorted accounts owing to their insular ideas and prejudices. The foreigners with their limited equipment for the task now and then record their superficial and wrong impressions but thanks to their different view points, come to our rescue where indigenous writers disappoint us. On the whole foreign evidence is a necessary supplement and corrective to indigenous testimony, though occasionally it dominates the field of Indian historiography.

**Literature** The two fundamental divisions into indigenous and foreign may be sub-divided into literary epigraphical, numismatic and archaeological or monumental though foreign sources are chiefly literary except for the history of Indian enterprise abroad. The indigenous literary material may be looked at from three points of view according to its conformity, comparatively full or partial, or non-conformity to historiographical needs—historical, quasi historical and non historical. Indian traditions, Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain, constitute our semi historical data. There is much valuable historical information in non historical works like the *Mahabhashya* of Patanjali and the *Samhita* of Gargi, besides the geographical data of the *Raghuvamsha* of Kalidasa, the *Dasakumaracharita* of Dandin and the *Kavyamimamsa* of Rajasekhara. The three lines of Indian historical tradition, to some extent independent of each other, are incorporated in the scriptural and non scriptural texts of the Brahmanists, Buddhists and Jains, in the *Puranas* and the *Itihasas* (epics), and in drupads like the *Mudraraksasha* of Visakhadatta and the *Malavikagnimitra* of Kalidasa. Professedly and really historical works are the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya and the *Rajatarangini* of Kalhana, and compositions like the *Harshacharita* of Bana and the *Vikramaditya Charita* of Bilhana may be regarded as defectively historical rather

than semi historical Though the literary and historical materials are not scanty—they are the historians mainstay when better evidences are not available—they are particularly defective from the point of view of political history and chronology The much regretted absence of an Indian Thucydides is questioned with the aid of Kalhana Though his supremacy among ancient Indian historians is undisputed he is not much valuable for the general history of India He lived in the period of Muslim influence he is an exception pointing out the rule The extraordinary richness of Sanskrit literature is not found in its historical branch This patent defect is to be admitted rather than explained away It is difficult to account for this gap in the Hindu genius and we can only oppose questions to questions Why was there no Indian Aeschylus? Was there a Greek Panini? Did ancient Rome produce a Thucydides in the palmy days of the Republic? The great historian of Rome Polybius was a Greek

**Epigraphy** *Epigraphy is the study of epigraphs or inscriptions writings mostly on stone (rocks pillars and boulders) and copper plates recording donations to individuals and institutions commemorating foundations and endowments and announcing the activities political religious etc, of kings and other persons official and non official Hence their classification into historical religious donative and commemorative records There are public and private records sometimes inscribed on sheets of metal other than copper They generally go beyond the immediate purpose of their composition and contain all kinds of valuable information genealogical geographical administrative economic and cultural The historical value of inscriptions in general should not be deduced from exceptional documents like those of Asoka Kharavela Rudradaman I, Samudragupta and Yasodharman of Malwa They are sui generis especially Asoka's sermons in stone The historical introductions to Chola inscriptions and the epigraphs bearing on Chola administration are another series of exceptional records Generally inscriptions are dated in Saka or Vikrama years or in regnal years occasionally in the years of the Kaliyuga era Most of them are contemporary and free from textual corruptions Though forgeries occur now*

and then in land grants, inscriptions relieve us from the oppressive generalities and lack of chronology characteristic of the literary materials. But usually the information supplied is fragmentary and jejune. It is only in a few cases that inscriptions constitute the mainstay of the historian. Frequently the dry bones of history alone are available. Hence the unattractiveness of many dynastic histories. No doubt inscriptions have brought to our knowledge the existence of dynasties unrevealed by the other sources but in many cases they have not enabled us to form correct judgments of men and things. For the period before Asoka we have no indigenous epigraphs, and for Harsha, this source is not much. One serious mistake is to be indulgent towards epigraphical *prasatis* and critical as regards literary eulogies. Inscriptions claim victories on behalf of kings which are contradicted by counter claims in other records of the same kind. Even the high minded Harsha did not admit his defeat by Pulakesin II, but the latter's triumph over the former is confirmed by Hsien Tsang. The predecessors' titles and achievements are assumed and claimed by the successors and confusion is created sometimes by the inclusion of the period of heir apparentcy in the regnal period as in Chola inscriptions. It would have been difficult to discriminate between the greatness of Krishnadeva Raya of Vijayanagar and the sorry role of his successor, Achyuta Raya, if we had not indigenous and foreign literature, the latter in particular. Our imperfect knowledge of many parts of our history is due to the inadequacy of the literary sources. How many lengthy inscriptions could do duty for the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya and the *Rajatarangini* of Kalhana? For our fuller knowledge of the Muslim and British periods of Indian History we are indebted to the abundance of historical literature and state papers.

**Numismatics** Indian Numismatics or the study of Indian coins, is a pigmy in comparison with the epigraphical giant. The fortunes of coinage in India were vitally affected by foreign influences in contrast with the independent history of inscriptions. The field of Numismatics is much narrowed if the study of coin legends (inscriptions on coins) is treated as a branch of epigraphy. The study of coin images and symbols comes under art, and therefore the most distinctive field of



Numismatics is the metallurgy and metrology of coins. Still, on the whole it has almost independently resuscitated the history of a few dynasties and enriched our knowledge of some others. Its value for political, chronological, administrative religious economic and cultural history is not negligible. But generally its evidence is subsidiary and corroborative. It gives us only a few nuts and screws for the framework of history. In spite of the great antiquity of punch marked coins, Numismatics becomes important as an auxiliary to history only after the death of Asoka. The Indo-Greek Saka, Kushan and Gupta coins are famous and the bilingual coins (with legends in Greek and an Indian tongue) of the Indo-Greeks Salas and Indo-Parthians have supplied the masterkey to the decipherment of Indian inscriptions. Debased coins and those in mint condition tell their own story. The Roman coins found in South India are helpful to the study of Indo-Roman commercial relations in the early centuries of the Christian era.

**Archaeology** In 'The Romance of Archaeology' the principle term is defined as the study of the past in general, and Alexander the Great is hailed as an archaeologist because the *Iliad* he loved best and kept a copy of it along with his sword under his pillow. This definition can claim only etymological sanction. A better definition is that Archaeology is the study of the material remains of the past, or technology in the past tense. For all practical purposes Epigraphy and Numismatics may be excluded, and the term confined to the study of monuments and other material relics of human labour. Pre-historic Archaeology concerns itself with the artifacts of early civilization, and Archaeology of the historical period with the more impressive artistic work of man. Therefore, an ancient Indian statue or building would come under Archaeology, but a treatise on it under technical literature. Archaeology, thus defined supplies the most direct evidence of the past, used as it is by any author. For pre-history our exclusive reliance is on such evidence, but for the historical epoch its service, though very important and even indispensable is supplementary. Its picture of some aspects of civilization cannot be improved upon by that of descriptive literature. Its value is increased when combined

sources dry up. But it cannot assist in the recovery of political history. Though it can give occasional clues to chronology its contribution to it is generally vague and conjectural. Hence much scope is afforded for speculative theorizing. Except in surface excavations and chance discoveries the guidance of literature is necessary for exploration. It was Homer who inspired the archaeological labours of Dr Schliemann at Troy and in Greece and the Indus Valley revelations are the ultimate result in one sense of literary references to the fertility and wealth of Sindh in the days of the Achaemenian Empire. The marvellous results obtained in Europe, Egypt and Western Asia prepared the way for the triumphs of Indian Archaeology which is still in its infancy particularly in South India. In short besides constituting the sole guide to pre history Archaeology helps the historian of civilization in many ways. The confusion of Kanishkan chronology which defied literary approach has been removed to a great extent thanks to the spade by the establishment of the priority of the Kadphises group to the Kanishka group of Kushan kings. The Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain monuments illustrate the history of their respective sects and the evolution of Indian civilization on its artistic side.

**Foreign Evidence** The evidence of foreign observers depends for its value on their capacity by education and experience for accurate and impartial observation on the literary and other standards they aimed at and on the object and duration of their stay in this country. Their general and particularistic proclivities and prejudices cannot be overlooked. Generally their testimony is valuable for what they heard from reliable men and saw with their own eyes and for the period of their sojourn here. Greek knowledge of India a by-product of Alexander's conquest of the Indus valley, was vastly increased by Megasthenes. Before that conquest Herodotus and others had regarded India only as an old curiosity shop. The author of the *Periplus* and the classical geographers Strabo, Pliny and Ptolemy gave their attention chiefly to the commerce between India and the Western world, and after *Cosmos Indicopleustes*, this stream of information dries up. The Chinese pilgrims started another grand inquest of India the most eminent of them being Fa-hien Hsueh

Tsang and I tsing, their notices are valuable directly for the condition of Buddhism in India, the first two are further helpful for administrative history, the third for literary history, and the first and the third for Indonesian religious history. The Chinese and Tibetan annals assist us now and then, the former particularly in connection with Indian enterprise abroad. The series of Arabic histories starts with the Islamic advent to India in the eighth century A D. The *Tarikh-i Hind* of the great Arabist and Sanskritist, Alberuni, an erudite work throwing much light on ancient Indian culture, was exploited by Abul Fazl in the literary sections of his unique statistical compilation, the *Ain-i Akbari*.

**Chronology** The observation that geography and chronology are the two eyes of history is as we have seen, to some extent true in the case of geography. As regards chronology, it is the very basis of the historical edifice. Though what has been depreciatingly called chronological history is not the goal of the modern historian, without chronology he is like a fish out of water. The more exact the date of happenings, the surer is his foundation, and the greater the solidity of the superstructure he rears. He should at least know the sequence of events, their priority or posteriority to other events. Imagine the consequences of regarding the Buddha as posterior to Asoka! Without dates the true causal link would be missed, and plagiarisms and indebtedness to predecessors could not be discussed. Abul Fazl's unacknowledged borrowings from Alberuni have cast a slur on his reputation for intellectual probity. The greatness of Sudraka, the Sanskrit dramatist, has been affected by the discovery of Bhasa's *Charudatta*, and that of Sayana by Venkata Madhava's commentary on the *Vedas*. A few scholars pooch pooch the chronological precision of the historian and speak in derision of Dr. Dryasdust. Though the arrangement of events in their chronological order is not his ultimate object, it is the first step to serious historical investigation. The lack of definite chronology impedes our progress at every step in Northern Indian History up to the Mauryas and in South Indian History up to the beginning of the Christian era. In the absence of dates, history would be not only blind but also spineless. The

chronological method varies with the nature of our sources. The rough and ready method of prehistoric chronology is superseded in the case of the Vedic age by literary and other approaches to its chronological problem. Our difficulties diminish as we march with the progress of time. The Saisunaga Nanda chronology is still unsatisfactory. From the Maurya period synchronisms and eras light up the path of the historian. The synchronism of Chandragupta Maurya with Alexander the Great and Seleucos Nikator, and of his grandson Asoka with Antiochos Theos and other Western princes is "the sheet anchor" of Maurya, pre Maurya and, to some extent, post Maurya chronology. The other major synchronisms are of the Satavahanas with the Western Kshatrapas, of Senguttuvan Chera with Gajabahu I of Ceylon, and of Samudragupta with Meghavarna of Ceylon. Records dated in the years of Vikrama, Saka, Kanishka, Gupta and Harsha eras supply at any rate unquestionable relative chronology. The researches of scholars have established the initial years of those eras and consequently the absolute chronology of a number of Indian dynasties. Our ancient literature is full of facts bearing on many aspects of life, but its central defect is its conspicuous lack of chronological sense.

## SECTION VII THE STONE AND IRON AGES

**Geological Epochs** Three geological epochs are mentioned, primary, secondary and tertiary. India did not exist in the first epoch. The second and the third witnessed the formation of this sub-continent and the evolution of life culminating in human life. Speculations on the cradle of humanity have placed it in Africa, Java, etc., the honour has been claimed for India as well, particularly for South India. Pre-historic ages have been named after the materials used in making implements of war and domestic utensils. The Stone Age is divided into three periods. The Eolithic, Palaeolithic and Neolithic (meaning early, old and new, stone) Ages. The existence of eoliths or rudely shaped flints is asserted by some and denied by others, similarly, the Ice Age.

**The Old Stone Age.** Palaeolithic remains have been found where a rock called quartzite, "an extremely refractory

material compared with flint,' is available, Madura, Trichinopoly, Tanjore North Arcot, Chingleput, Bellary, Cuddapah, Nellore and Godavari Districts and Mysore Palaeolithic caves have been discovered in the Kurnool District. The Nizam's State, Bombay Presidency, Gujarat and Rajputana are other centres of this culture. The life of the palaeolithic man does not remind us of "the noble savage." He dragged on a miserable existence with the gifts of Nature and such rude implements as the *coup de poing*, or hand axe, which his untutored intelligence might devise. He seems to have invented fire. His wooden comb has been found at Guntakal. His cave paintings at Singanpur\*—a village near Raigarh in the Raigarh State, C. P.—are remarkable for figures of animals and hunting scenes, but their age is somewhat doubtful. The latest phase of the Old Stone Age is assigned to c 35 000 to c 10,000 B. C. During this period may be placed the pre-Dravidians who were allied to the African Negrito people and whose chief descendants today are the hill tribes. It is supposed by scholars that there was a long interval between the Old and New Stone Ages.

**The New Stone Age.** The Neolithic settlements were determined by the availability of the trap rock (different from the quartzite of the Palaeolithic people), suitable for making polished weapons and implements like the celt. The principal sites of Neolithic culture are found in the Salem, Cuddapah, Anantapur, Bellary and Kurnool Districts, and in the Nizam's State, Gujarat and Kathiawar. It was during this age (c 10 000—c 5,000) that the foundations of Indian civilization were laid, probably by the Dravidians. Substantial material progress was made and many of the superstitions of to-day originated. The nomadic life of the previous epoch was gradually superseded by settled life, signalled by the practice of agriculture, domestication of animals, and burial of the dead. Pottery and cotton weaving were known, and the tools exhibit art and variety. Class divisions existed, but to trace to them the later caste system is to overlook the fundamental differences between the two social systems.

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\* P. N. Mitra, *Pre historic India*, (1927), pp. 453—63.

**The Metal Age** In Northern India, the New Stone Age was succeeded by the Copper Age and in South India by the Iron Age. The Adittanallur (Adichchanallur, Tinnevely District) settlement is 'the most extensive pre-historic site so far discovered in South India. The finds here consist of big unglazed urns containing complete human skeletons and rice husks, polished pottery, iron implements, gold and bronze ornaments, figures of the buffalo, etc. At Perambur (Chingleput District) have been found pottery, iron implements and conch shell ornaments. Iron Age rock-cut caves exist near Tellicherry (Malabar District) 'unlike the prehistoric tombs found elsewhere, containing pottery, iron implements, grinding stones and pestles and a polished red jar with four legs

## SECTION VIII THE CHALCOLITHIC CIVILIZATION

**Character of the Civilization** The archaeological finds made mostly at Mohenjo daro, on the right bank of the Indus (Larkana District Sindh), and to some extent at Harappa (Montgomery District, Panjab) have thrown the other prehistoric antiquities into the shade. Excavations of other sites as well in Sindh and the Panjab indicate that a great civilization flourished in the Indus valley, connecting it with the rest of India as the gold found there is alloyed with silver as in Kolar (Mysore) and as some of the precious stones discovered seem to belong to the Nilgiris. The name originally suggested for this astonishing civilization, 'Indo-Sumerian,' has been found to be unsuitable owing to its distinctive features, though commerce with Sumeria must have influenced it. It is too early to replace the term now employed, 'the Indus civilization,' by the more general term, 'Indian civilization.' As the weapons and utensils are of copper and stone, the label *chalcolithic* (copper stone) is employed, but it obscures the inconspicuousness of the stone finds and the maturity of the civilization.

**The Finds** Houses of burnt brick (without ornamentation, but with drains, storeys, pipes and other paraphernalia of civilized and luxurious life) and wide streets with public drains have been unearthed. A remarkable find is the great bath with *verandahs* and rooms, a swimming pool in the middle and a hot water bath. Many seals of diverse shapes—square.

rectangular and cylindrical—are made of steatite faience and ivory with figures of animals like the unicorn humped bull tiger elephant and fish eating crocodile and of many plants and human and divine beings and with inscriptions in an undeciphered script The other important remains are stone images in *yogic* pose a dancing girl in bronze two wonderful statuettes from Harappa and innumerable clay figurines of men, women and animals besides weapons and domestic utensils

**Date** A period of about 500 years is assigned to the seven strata laid bare on the basis of two generations for each stratum In the light of the excavations at Troy a period of one thousand years is not untenable On account of the striking similarities between the Indus and Sumerian seals the latter assignable to about 3000 B C Sir John Marshall has suggested 3250 2750 B C for the Indus civilization A slightly different opinion is that of Mackay The upper levels of Mohenjo-daro are contemporaneous with the latter part of the Early Dynastic Period of Babylonia c 2550 B C while the lower levels where the objects found are barely distinguishable from those of the latest levels could hardly antedate the latter by more than five hundred years and perhaps as little as three hundred \*

**Art and Writing** But for the conspicuous abdomen the Harappa statuettes resemble the best Greek art The dancing figure is supposed to be Nataraja and its sculptural perfection is unrivalled by later Indian performance Anatomical accuracy is admirably shown Domestic utensils are plain rather than ornamented The writing is from right to left and occasionally *boustrophedon* or right to left and left to right in alternate lines Professor Langdon is emphatically of opinion that the script is the parent of the Brahmi script of Asoka's inscriptions In spite of much effort the real key to its decipherment is not available

**Religion** Terracotta figurines of the Mother Goddess show her popularity Human sacrifices were offered to her A god with three faces in *yogic* pose surrounded by four animals on a seal is regarded as the prototype of Siva con

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\* 1 Mackay *The Indus Civilisation* (1935) p 11

ceived as Pasupati or Lord of Beasts, his horns must have developed later into the *trisula* or trident. The *linga* worship, reverence for trees and animals, sanctity of water and importance of bathing are unmistakably indicated. In short, we get at the fountain head of popular Hinduism.

**Social Life** The metals and precious stones found show the activity of commerce with Western Asia, the Gange Valley and South India. This urban and perhaps cosmopolitan civilization has not been pictured by a Vatsyayana. There was an abundance of ornaments—girdles, ear rings, and anklets for women, and necklaces, finger rings and armlets for both sexes were made of gold, silver, shell, copper and even terracotta. Bangles were sometimes worn covering the whole arm up to the axilla. The domestic utensils were mostly of baked clay, rarely of copper and bronze. Faience was used for ornamental vases. There were toys like whistles, carts, animals and birds and figurines of men and women. The chief games were played with dice and marbles. The weights were binary and decumal. 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 160, 200, 320, 640 and 1600. The weapons of war were axes, spears and slings, but no armour. Wheat, barley, beef, mutton, pork, poultry and fish were the articles of consumption. Cotton spinning agriculture and trade were the main occupations. Burials were of three kinds complete, partial and post cremation, the last being generally practised. In short, it is difficult to believe that the inhabitants of Mohenjodaro were a pre historic people.

### Compared with the Early Vedic Civilization

While the Indus Valley Civilization was urban, complex and luxurious, the early Vedic was rural, simple and agricultural, iron was unknown to the former and armour known only to the latter. Though meat eating many metals and offensive weapons were common to both, aversion for fish was characteristic of the Vedic civilization. As against the bull, tiger and elephant and absence of the horse in one case we have the cow and the horse of the Vedic people who had no knowledge of the tiger and just a little acquaintance with the elephant. While images, goddesses and *lingas* were characteristic of the Indus civilization, the early Vedic



was aniconic with male gods and Agni predominant, and the phallic cult in disrepute. To this contrasted picture of the two civilizations, it is objected that the equation of the Vedic *pur* with a fort is untenable that some utensils like the mortar and pestle were employed in the Vedic period, that the Vedic aversion for fish is ill founded, that images, Siva worship and *yoga* are mentioned in the *Vedas* and that the condemnation of *sinsadevas* or phallic worshippers is sectional. But setting aside argument from silence—absence of evidence, and possibility of evidence forthcoming in future, the extant data, archaeological and literary, broadly justify the striking dissimilarity between the Indus and Rigvedic civilizations. In spite of the protests of a few scholars, the Indus civilization is definitely non Aryan, pre Aryan, and superior to the Indo-Aryan civilization, though it is too soon to say that it was originated by the Dravidians.

## CHAPTER II

### THE VEDIC AGE (c 2000—c 600 B C)

#### SECTION I THE VEDIC LITERATURE

**Different Strata** The Vedic age is the period which witnessed the composition of the four *Vedas*—the *Brahmanas*, the *Aranyaka*, and the *Upanishads*, the last two constituting the *gnanakanda* and the others the *karmakanda*. The Mimamsakas and the Vedantins regard the *karmakanda* and the *gnanakanda* respectively as the *Veda par excellence*, each treating the other *kanda* as *artharada* (explanatory and secondary) not as *vidhi* (mandatory and primary). Though this distinction is fundamental philosophically, the unity of the whole collection is recognised by the division of each *Veda* into the *Samhita Brahmana*, *Aranyaka* and *Upanishad* portions and by their collective appellation, the *sruti* or revealed literature. The *Rigveda*, the *Samaaveda* and the *Yajurveda* are known as the *trayi* or the triad of *Vedas*. From the historical point of view, the *Rigveda*, the *Yajurveda* and the *Atharvaveda* are important, the last containing matter relating to pre Rigvedic times, though later in composition than the other three *Vedas*. The first covers an epoch by

itself, and the second marks the transition between the Rig-vedic period and that of the *Brahmanas*, just as the *Aranyakas* are transitional between the *Brahmanas* and the *Upanishads*. The Rigvedic age may be regarded as the early Vedic period and the age of the *Brahmanas* and the *Upanishads* as the later Vedic period. The *Rigveda* is the earliest and historically the most important stratum of the Vedic Literature.

#### The Four Vedas

its *viks* or hymns, mostly addressed to various gods, eulogising and imploring them for worldly advantages like longevity, wealth and progeny. From them the other *Vedas* have borrowed freely. The *Samaveda* is characteristic for its manner of recitation, its contents being almost identical with those of the *Rigveda*. About half of the *Yajurveda* is new and more than half of it in prose, and its arrangement is subordinated to the performance of *yajnas* or sacrifices. The *Atharvaveda* is the grand repository of occult lore—magic and spells—, and its canonicity was recognised much later than that of the other *Vedas*, though with a difference. Hence its exclusion from the *trayi*. The *Brahmanas* or explanations in prose of the

#### The Brahmanas and the Aranyakas

sacrificial ceremonial, contain *vidhis* or injunctions and *arthavadas* or glorifications of the value of the ritual. The most important of them from the historical point of view are the *Satapatha* and *Atareya Brahmanas*. The name *Aranyakas*, or forest compositions, indicates their esoteric origin and character, and the *Atareya* and *Taittiriya Aranyakas* are well known.

The *Upanishads* contain esoteric knowledge *par excellence* which is summed up in the *maharukya* (the great statement) of the *Chandogya Upanishad*, (*Atma*) *Tat tvam asi* (That art thou), read as *Atat-tvam-asi* by Madhva and other

#### The Upanishads

dualists. Only a few of the numerous *Upanishads* are pre-Buddhistic. They together with the *Brahma Sutras* and the *Bhagavad Gita* are called the *Prasthanatraya* commented upon by Sankara and Madhva. The *Upanishads* in general may be described as the literature of spiritual power, appealing to man, irrespective of climes and ages. They evoked the enthusiastic admiration of the German philosopher, Schopenhauer, who says "That incomparable

book stirs the spirit to the very depths of the soul. From every sentence deep, original, and sublime thoughts arise. In the whole world there is no study, except that of the originals, so beneficial and so elevating as that of the *Oupne-khat*. It has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death." He obtained a Latin-Greek translation of the Persian version of Dara Shukoh, the favourite son of the Mughal emperor, Shah Jahan. Alberuni, the Muslim scholar, admired them, and Dara studied and translated them or merely patronised their translation. In India the *Upanishads* became the fountain head of the Vedānta philosophy. In short, they embody the thought power of the Brahmins and Kshatriyas, and the most important of them are the *Chandogya* and *Bṛihadaranyaka Upanishads*.

**Accent.** One remarkable feature of the Vedic Literature is its accentuation. The basic accents are *anudatta*, *udatta* and *svarita* (jointly called *tristarya*)—low, middle and high tones—, though Whitney treats *anudatta* as normal, *udatta* as high and *svarita* as occupying a place between the two. *Ekasruti* is one of the three accents employed without the co-operation of the others, but this explanation has not been unanimously accepted by the authorities. The employment of accents is conducive to brevity and helps in some cases to determine the sense in which a word is used. It facilitates the maintenance of the Vedic text in purity and the process of committing it to memory. Though the authorities speak of the triple accent with regard to Vedic and Classical Sanskrit, it is employed only in some portions of the Vedas. Even in the latter case, sometimes *ekasruti* is adopted. The *Āitareya Brahmana*, among others, is not now recited in *tristarya*, and the *Taittiriya Aranyaka* indicates no uniformity in accentuation. *Ekasruti* is employed in sacrifices. Thus the triple accent fell into abeyance to some extent in the Vedic period itself, and disappeared altogether in the period of Classical Sanskrit. Its final disappearance was partly due to the desire to discriminate between the *Vedas* and works like the *Puranas* intended specially for women and Sudras who were prohibited from studying the *Vedas*. Classical poets use *slesha* (double entendre) and similar figures of speech, and the fixation of

meaning characteristic of the triple accent would be unsuited to that purpose. Moreover the complexity resulting from the introduction of the *tristvarya* into a highly inflexional language like Sanskrit was felt to work against the appeal of profane literature to a large number of people and consequently that *svara* was avoided.\*

**Historical Value of Vedic Literature** The Vedic Literature is voluminous very well preserved and contemporary, and its evidence is more trustworthy than that of the Epics or the *Puranas*. In it we get at the early phases of Indian life and thought. Its antiquity gives it a unique importance for the history of the world. Its account of Indian life is a series of pictures of the evolution of Vedic civilization, from robust optimism to rank pessimism. The geographical knowledge exhibited in each stratum helps us to trace the progress of the Aryanisation of India in three stages. But, owing to lack of precise chronology the dynastic annals cannot be sketched, and the doubtful help of the *Puranas* is requisitioned, a few scholars emphasising the value of the tradition embodied in them, on the ground that it is the true historical tradition, as distinct from the religious or priestly tradition of the *Vedas*. The only bit of archaeological evidence available is a Vedic *sma sana* (burial ground) discovered at Lauriya Nandangarh (Bihar)†. In the historical interpretation of the *Vedas*, the argument from silence is sometimes used without justification, and it should never be forgotten that we are here concerned with the chronicle of one aspect of life primarily and that the record of secular life is incidental and fragmentary. We know next to nothing about the distant precursors of Kautilya and Vatsyayana.

## SECTION II THE ARYAN INVASION OF INDIA

**Origin of the Aryans** It is a wild goose chase to attempt to locate the Aryans in their original habitat and after writing hundreds of pages, scholars come to the lame and impotent conclusion that no definite answer is possible. The Asiatic and European hypotheses divide the savants whose

\* K. A. Sivaramakrishna Sastri (Ed.) *Sitaramaddhantachandrika* Introduction, pp. LV—LV. 1936.

† *The Cambridge History of India (C. H. I.) I* (1922) p. 616.

peregrinations in search of the home of the *Wiros* (common term for men in a number of languages) extend from the Arctic Ocean to our own country. Professor Giles gives his adherence to the Hungarian hypothesis. The term *Arya* is used in the *Vedas* in opposition to *Dasyu* or *Dasa* to denote the conquerors and the conquered respectively. We may confine our attention to the question whether the Indo Aryans were of foreign origin or not, in other words, whether there was an Aryan invasion of India or not.

**The Orthodox View** The arguments in favour of the orthodox view are many, and their cumulative effect should not be missed, however defective each argument in itself may be. To establish a counter hypothesis requires not merely the disestablishment of the original hypothesis, but also the positive establishment of the former. To oppose objections and possibilities to *prima facie* probabilities does not take us far. It is sheer dogmatism to regard the Aryan invasion of India as a settled fact, or to write it down as a myth. It is a good working hypothesis, explaining a large number of groups of relevant data. The philological argument consists in the remarkable similarities of Sanskrit to Greek, Latin, German and English, and in the particularly close affinities between the languages of the *Veda* and the *Avesta* (Iranian *Veda*). German excavations at Boghazkoi in Cappadocia have brought to light inscriptions of about 1400 B.C., mentioning Vedic deities like Indra, Varuna and the Nasatyas. The geographical horizon of the *Rigveda* relates predominantly to North West India, including Afghanistan, and the conflicts between the *Arya* and the *Dasyu* seem to be those between foreign invaders and sons of the soil, the former showing the arrogance of the conquerors in describing the conquered as *dasa* (slave) and *anasa* (noseless or speechless). Ethnology supplies us with a definite physical type—tall, fair and straight nosed—in Kashmir, the Panjab and Rajputana, called the Indo-Aryan type.

**Objections of Doubtful Value** The opponents of the orthodox theory urge that there is no unmistakable evidence of racial conflict in the *Rigveda*, that Rigvedic warfare is reminiscent of that of cattle-lifting border tribes,

and that the stability of racial characters is a superstition. Above all, language is no test of race. Another point pressed into service is that the Puranic tradition is ignorant of the Aryan invasion and that the close connection between India and Iran does not prove any invasion of India. All these objections oppose possibilities to probabilities, and fail to note the direction indicated by all the arguments on the other side read together which as arguments of general validity, are unexceptionable.

**The "Wedge" Theory.** The theory of a second Aryan invasion of India through Chitral (N.W.F.P.) and Gilgit (Kashmir) with insufficient women is advanced in order to explain the broad distinction between the vernaculars of the Madhyadesa (the United Provinces) and those of the outer band (*viz.* West, South and East of the Madhyadesa), coupled with the close affinities of the languages of the latter group. Hence the supposition that the second stream of Aryan invaders struck like a wedge into the Middle Country. This theory, suggested by the linguistic data, is supported by the anthropometric differences in the Indus and Ganges Valleys. The fraternal polyandry of the Pandavas is regarded as the custom of the late comers resulting from inadequacy of women. Thus this theory, called after Hoernle, Grierson and Risley, or named the "Ring Fence" or "Wedge" theory, gives some explanation of the linguistic crux, but cannot be regarded as perfectly sound. A few scholars have followed Pargiter in making Allahabad the starting point of the Aryan adventure.

**Date of the Vedas.** It is extremely probable that the Aryan invasion of India happened. Its date is a much-debated question which can be answered only with partial certainty. There are various approaches to it, scientific and literary, and the apparently less certain approach gives the greater moral certainty. The lower chronological limit of the Vedic Literature is fixed with comparative ease, as the Upanishadic thought is the bed rock of Buddhism, and consequently the last phase of that literature must be anterior to 600 B.C. The upper limit is practically the date of the *Rigveda*, leaving an interval

between the Aryan invasion and the composition of the conqueror's literature. On geological grounds relating to the almost insular character of the Panjab and to earthquake shocks it is held that the *Rigveda* must have been composed about 25,000 B.C. The astronomical solution is less ambitious though it shows the tendency to attribute high antiquity to the *Vedas*. A passage in the *Brahmanas* bearing on the point in the ecliptic reached by the sun at solstice is understood to indicate 1186 B.C. On the basis of a change in the beginning of the seasons, the *Rigveda* is assigned to about 4000 B.C. The same conclusion is suggested by calculations regarding the vernal equinox. But this scientific solution depends for its validity on the accuracy of the basic data, and if the data were correct, why are different results obtained? The literary approach is founded on the language of the various strata of the Vedic Literature and on the evolution of civilization revealed in them. Though Max Muller was so pessimistic as to declare that no human power could definitely say whether the Vedic hymns were composed in 1000 or 3000 B.C. he tentatively suggested 1200 B.C. for the earliest hymns, recognising at the same time the possibility of pushing that date further back. The *Puranas* give the interval between Parikshit and Mahapadma Nanda as 1050 years, and this would take the former sovereign to the 14th century B.C. Identifying this Parikshit with his namesake of the *Atharvaveda*, the *Rigveda* may be assigned to about 2000 B.C. and the *Brahmanas* to about 1000 B.C.

**Aryanisation of India** The Aryanisation of India was a long process partially pictured in the Vedic Literature, and the *Ramayana* gives us glimpses into the Aryanisation of South India. The geographical outlook of the *Rigveda* is confined to North Western India the Ganges and the Jumna forming its eastern limit. The *Yajurveda* shows a wider knowledge of Northern India, radiating from the Ganges Valley. The *Atharvaveda* summarises the geographical knowledge of the other *Vedas*. The *Brahmanas* mention a number of cis-Vindhyan tribes and peoples. Thus during the creative period of the four *Vedas* and in the subsequent period of

systematisation, followed again by another creative epoch of the *Upanishads* we discern the reclamation of India to Aryan ways progressing stage by stage corresponding to the three geographical areas—the Indus Valley, the Ganges Valley and the rest of Northern India and South India.

### SECTION III POLITICAL HISTORY

Data for political history we have in plenty in the Vedic Literature, the *Itihasas* and the *Puranas*. In spite of chronological difficulties the example of Pargiter has been persevered in by other scholars, except in his allegiance to the Puranic tradition in preference to that embodied in the *Vedas*. The distrust of either tradition is undeserved, but neither tradition is free from fault. A harmonious combination of all the available data though undisciplined by chronology, may be attempted. Mr H C Raychaudhuri, relying on the Vedic tradition, assigns Parikshit to the 9th century B C\*. Parikshit, Janamejaya and their successors, ruling over the Kuru country, including Hastinapura and Kurukshetra, with their capital at Asandivat, were followed by Janaka of Upanishadic fame who is placed by Mr Chaudhuri in the 7th century B C though the Puranic tradition would take him back to the 12th century B C. The latter was king of Videha (North Bihar), with his capital at Mithila. There were nine other contemporary kingdoms, including Kasi and Kosala. Janaka was a *samrat* (higher than a king), and his court became truly famous for philosophical disputation led by Yajnavalkya, as recorded in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*. The fall of Videha under his successors towards the close of the 7th century B C led to the establishment of republican rule there and to the rise of the kingdom of Kasi.

### SECTION IV ADMINISTRATION

The Rigvedic tribal polity was monarchical though not to the exclusion of non-monarchical forms of government. The rule was hereditary succession, diversified by elective kingship. The *rajan* or king was the war lord, accompanied by a number of officers of whom the *purohita* or priest was the most influential. Thus the tradition of ecclesiastical statesmen developed. The king's other functions are not



quite clear, but there is much emphasis on royal activity to protect the people. The *senani* or commandant was in charge of minor expeditions. The *gramani* or village headman was a sub-commander. The popular element is to be found in the *samiti* and *sabha*, but the character of these two bodies is obscure. In this period, the *rajan*, like the Homeric king, was merely the highest of the nobles, and there would not be much scope for the development of his autocracy. In the later Vedic age, the progress of political integration is vouched for by a crop of technical terms, indicative of many kinds of sovereignty, recorded in the *Atareya Brahmana*—*rajya*, *rairajya* and *samrajya*—and by the elaboration of the ritual of coronation—the *rajapeya*, *rajasuya* and *asvamedha* sacrifices. In other words, the conceptions of *adhirat* and *ekarat* developed in this age. With the external growth of the kingdom, royal power increased, and the popular assemblies seem to have declined, though their existence is proved by the recorded instances of their decrees expelling kings. The royal officers became numerous, and the *purohita* was still the chief of the *ratnins*.

## SECTION V RELIGION

The Rigvedic religion was worship of the forces of Nature, though Varuna controlled the *rita* or moral order. He was gradually superseded by Indra. Agni and Soma were next in importance. A few goddesses occupied a subordinate position. Gods like Mitra and Varuna were bracketed together. Some times one god is lauded as the greatest, another god receiving the same honour on a different occasion. Rudra and Vishnu who became prominent later were now minor deities. This polytheism was tempered towards the close of the period by the recognition of the unity of the gods in the following remarkable statement: "What is in reality One is called differently." There were no speculations on the life after death. The *Rigveda* emphasises the sacrifice as the means of propitiating the gods and of obtaining from them long life, cows, able-bodied sons, etc. Human sacrifice was, however, absent. The pious offerings were grain, milk, ghee, flesh and soma juice. Like the early Indo-Aryans their gods were famous for manliness, power and practical wisdom, except in the case of Varuna, their ethical character was not

stressed, and transcendental knowledge was beyond their ken. In the next period Rudra and to a lesser extent Vishnu became major gods, and the former received the appellation of Siva. In the evolution of the Rudra Siva conception non-Aryan influences asserted themselves. The technique and theory of sacrifice were elaborated to such an extent that religion became mechanical and rigid. Thus was supplied the basis for the later extravagant view of the Mimamsakas that the sacrifice was all in all and that by means of it man could subdue the gods. This concentration on sacrifice led to the elevation of the ritualistic *Veda* to the rank of infallible guide to salvation irrespective of God Himself. Consequently the expounders of the glory of Vedic sacrifice became atheists, though technically they were not regarded as *nastikas* (atheists) because of their unbounded faith in the *Vedas*. During this period, philosophical speculation reached its climax in the *Upanishads* which identify the real with the absolute which cannot be described except negatively—*neti, neti* (not that, not that). The *mahatalya, tatram-asi*, identifies the *jmatma* (individual soul) with the *paramatma* (universal soul or "over soul"). This period witnessed the formulation of the doctrine of *karma*, investing a series of individual births with organic unity. But the explanation of the phenomenal world by the doctrine of *maya* was an achievement of later thought.

## SECTION VI ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Though hunting was a major activity, the Rigvedic society was predominantly engaged in pastoral and agricultural pursuits in villages. Cattle, horses, sheep, goats, asses and dogs were reared. Agricultural operations were performed, *yava* or barley grown and channels dug for irrigation. Working in wood and metals (*ayas*) was well advanced, weaving and tanning being known. Agricultural labour was mostly free, not servile. Navigation was in a rudimentary stage. Famines were dreaded. The food of the people consisted of barley, cakes, milk, ghee, flesh and beef. Though oxen were killed for consumption, the cow was sacred and called *apthya* (not to be killed). The

intoxicating drinks were the sacrificial juice from the *soma* plant and *sura* prepared from barley. Woollens were used, though the case of cotton is debated. Gold ornaments like necklaces, clothing and ear rings, anklets and bracelets were worn by men and women. Attention was given to hair dressing, and though beards were popular, shaving was known. The chief amusements were chariot riding, dicing and dancing. There were a few musical instruments like the lute and the flute. There was commercial intercourse by land and water with Western Asia and Egypt. The system of exchange by barter existed along with *nishka* (coin) and *hiranyapinda* (unstamped gold). In the next period, agriculture and cattle rearing made good progress. Better ploughs and manures were used. Grains like wheat and rice, and oilseeds like sesame, were grown. Urban life developed gradually. Industrial activity became more varied, and innumerable professions came into existence including that of the *sreshthi* (flourishing merchant). Even usury made its appearance. Further knowledge of metals was acquired—tin, lead and silver. Food, drink and clothing did not change. The Upanishadic Yajnavalkya, the greatest philosopher of the Vedic age, was very fond of the tender portions of the flesh of cows and oxen. The Sanskrit word *goghna* (guest) means literally one for whom a cow is slain. The supreme *dharma* of *ahimsa* (non injury) was of later growth. Foreign trade became more extensive. New coins came into existence—*satamana*, *suarna*, *pada* and *krishnala*.

## SECTION VII SOCIAL LIFE

**Caste** The only reference to the four castes in the *Rigveda* is in the *Purushasukta*, which is regarded by some as an interpolation. It is a part and parcel of the creation myth to which parallels are met with in other countries. At best it may be regarded as embodying the organic conception of Indo-Aryan society. Historically the caste system may be traced to a racial segregation of the conquerors from the conquered, and a subsequent division among the conquerors themselves as civilisation advanced. Thus emanated the distinction between the *dajia* (twice born) and the *sudra*—a hard

nut to crack for etymologists Sankara derives the word *sudra* from a root meaning to be sorrowful Probably it was the name of a Dravidian tribe first encountered by the Aryans in India, subsequently applied to similar tribes The caste system was apparently based on the distinction of *varna* (colour of the skin or pigmentation) It is going too far to say that it did not exist even in an embryonic stage in the Rigvedic age though caste divisions were natural and normal in the beginning In the period of the *Brahmanas* and the *Upanishads*, the four castes were fully formed and also many sub-castes The flexibility of the system is proved by the acceptance of Satyakama Jabala, the son of a *dasi* (slave woman) by an unknown father, as the disciple of a famous *Rishi* because he spoke the truth and was therefore a Brahman The prohibition of inter-caste marriage was not rigid, and cases of ascent to the highest social status are on record The evolution of caste during this period was due to the coming together of the conquerors and the vanquished, and the resulting social compromise was less objectionable than the reduction of the conquered to slavery and degradation might have been Even the rigid caste system of later times may be regarded as less ungenerous than the Greek system of slavery in antiquity

**Women** Though the patriarchal Rigvedic society subordinated the female to the male, monogamy was the rule, and the bond between husband and wife was regarded as holy and permanent Polygamy was exceptional, and child marriage unknown, the normal age of marriage being sixteen or seventeen years Post puberty marriage was normal and old maids existed Freedom of choice prevailed and only brother sister and father daughter marriages were prohibited Adoption of sons was not favoured The hardship of the widow was occasionally tempered by *nuyoga*, (levirate) that is, marriage of the sonless widow with her deceased husband's brother In the later Vedic period, the custom of *sati* or self immolation of widows grew up Royal polygamy became normal, four wives were allowed Though female children were not exposed the son was preferred to the daughter Restrictions on marriage increased, and *sagotra* marriages were disapproved Some of the texts

state that "one woman cannot have more than one husband at the same time"

• **The Education** The education of women throughout the Vedic age was of a high standard. Some of the Rigvedic hymns were composed by ladies—Visvavara Ghosha, Lopamudra, Apala and Mudgalani—and in the *Upanishads*, Yajnavalkya is questioned by his wife Maitreyi (his other wife being Katyayani) and challenged by Gargi, though that sage met the challenge successfully. The distinction between Upadhyayas (women teachers) and Upadhyayanis (wives of teachers) is significant. Whatever might be their inferiority in other respects women did not lack mental pabulum, and their equality with men in religion and ritual was substantial though the *upanayana* ceremony had fallen into disuse in their case. It was the intellectual starvation of women in later ages that was responsible for the assimilation of their position to that of Sudras, and for the development among them of an inferiority complex.

• **Crimes** In the Rigvedic age, various forms of theft with and without violence were common. The marriage between brother and sister, or father and daughter, was condemned as incest, though in much later times brother-sister marriages were recognised in Iran and Egypt, especially in royal families. The standard of sexual morality was high, though prostitution existed. In the later Vedic period, foeticide, murder of Brahmans and theft of gold were regarded as major crimes. Accidental killing of a man was distinguished from culpable homicide. In the *Upanishads* the axe ordeal is mentioned for thieves.

## SECTION VIII CULTURE

**Writing** According to the orthodox view, the Vedic Literature was committed to writing long after its composition, and writing was introduced into India about 800 B C. The Brahmi alphabet is traced to a Semitic source. Some would assign the origin of writing in India to the 5th century B C. But there is no doubt that it must have come into existence before Panini, and we know that pre-historic Mohenjo-daro was not ignorant of writing.

**Literature** The Vedic Literature has already been surveyed. Though its literary value cannot equal its historical value, the hymns exhibit "a surprising degree of metrical skill and command of language and contain much genuine poetry often expressed in beautiful and even notable imagery; (though) their poetry is often imposed by conceits and mysticism, its diction is simpler and more natural than that of post Vedic Sanskrit"\*

**Grammar and Lexicography** Towards the close of the Vedic age lived Yaska. His *Nirukta* is valuable for etymology and grammar and his prose is in classical style. He mentions a number of his predecessors. He is assigned by some to about 500 B C, but his priority to Panini is indisputable. The *Pratisakyas* of the Vedic period bear evidence of the grammatical analysis characteristic of the age. The *Nighantus* (glossaries) of nouns and verbs record the earliest efforts of Indian lexicographers.

**Philosophy, Medicine and Astronomy** The Yoga system must have been of earlier origin than the Sankhya which was systematised about 800 B C. Medicine declined to some extent after the Rigvedic period as the status of the physician deteriorated. Numerous diseases are mentioned: consumption, leprosy, dysentery, jaundice, senility, etc. The *Atharvaveda* and the *Satapatha Brahmana* give a correct list of human bones. Much progress was made in astronomy. In the Rigvedic age the year consisted of twelve months of thirty days each, and a thirteenth month also existed. In the *Brahmana* period, we find twelve months divided into six seasons and the knowledge of twenty seven or twenty eight *nakshatras* (stars). The introduction of the latter and of the legend of the flood mentioned in the *Satapatha Brahmana* is regarded by some scholars as due to Babylonian influence.

**Education** A passage from the *Chandogya Upanishad* is illuminating. "I have studied the *Rigveda*, the *Yajurveda*, the *Samaveda*, the *Atharvaveda*, the epic and mythological poems as the fifth *Veda*, grammar, arithmetic, divination, chronology, dialectics, politics, theology, necromancy, the art of war, astronomy, snake-charming and the fine arts."

\* Macdonell, *India's Past* (1927), p. 39

## SECTION IX SOUTH INDIA

In the later Vedic age there were in South India a few Aryan kingdoms like Vidarbha with its capital at Kundina. Kalinga was independent though to some extent exposed to Aryan influence. The rest of South India was occupied by non Aryan tribes like the Andhras, Savaras, Pulindas and Mushikas. Though the term '*Dakshinapada*' is found in the *Rigveda*, Aryanisation of South India commenced only in the *Brahmana* period. We have no references in the Vedic Literature to the political condition of the Tamil country. South India was in commercial contact with Western Asia and Egypt and exported ivory, apes and peacocks. It is useless to speculate on the colonisation of Africa and Malayasia by South Indians.

## SECTION X "THE HEROIC AGE"

The Itihasic or heroic age is historically a misleading term like the Sutra period, suggesting an unhistorical unity of civilization. The *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* belong to various ages covering more than ten centuries from about 1000 B C. Their historical value will emerge clearly only if their nuclei are laid bare. Their data must be relegated to their respective ages before they could be utilised for historical purposes. While the *Mahabharata* is an Indian encyclopaedia of the pre-Christian era, built round a solid substratum of historical truth, the *Ramayana* is more imaginary than historical, in spite of its greater unity and compactness. The civilization described in the epics is many-sided and contradictory, and the works if treated historically in their present form, can only give us a bundle of contradictions. No useful purpose is served in summarising their social and cultural contents if these cannot be read along with the other better sources available for the different periods of Indian History.

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## CHAPTER III

### THE SAISUNAGA-NANDA PERIOD

(c 600—c 325 B C)

**Character of the Period** The sixth century B C witnessed religious and political developments of far-reaching consequences, and the intellectual and moral efforts of the age in India were so intensive and conspicuous that it has been called a wonderful century. In the same century lived the Buddha, Heraclitus, Isaiah, Confucius and Lao Tse without knowing or influencing one another, and it has been characterised as "the beginning of the adolescence of mankind". Zoroaster (660—580 B C) belonged partly to that century, though some would assign him to about 1000 B C. The Saisunaga Nanda period further saw the beginnings of foreign penetration into India which culminated in the crowning ambition of Alexander the Great. The political integration of Northern India advanced so rapidly that an imperial system was elaborated before the time of Chandragupta Maurya, supplying the background for the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya and heralding the downfall of the republican institutions which had been so strong in the sixth century B C. The Buddhist upheaval stirred the Brahminical society to its depths so that religious and social reconstruction on its part became inevitable and the *Sutras* made their appearance. Further, Panini, the link between the Vedic and post Vedic periods lived in this epoch.

#### SECTION I THE RELIGIOUS QUEST

**Religious Unrest** The religious quest characteristic of the sixth century B C, outlined in the literature of the period, should not mislead us into the supposition of an age when men in general, hanging head downwards panted for salvation. The activity of the period was that of the leaders whose number is, no doubt, surprisingly large. Whether there were sixty three schools of thought or not diverse systems prevailed, ranging from rank atheism and unabashed materialism to mechanical piety and quickened spirituality. The contrast between Ajita Keshakambalin (Invincible Hair Shirt), the leading materialist, and



the high minded Gautama Buddha cannot be exaggerated. The theory of life propounded by Gautama and Mahavira was the successor to multitudinous theories emitted by self-constituted teachers, more noisy than profound, and represented the survival of the fittest. Animism clashed with atheism and agnosticism, polytheism with pantheism, dualism watching the fray. In short, the problem of *moksha* or salvation rivetted the attention and called forth the passionate devotion of a large number of prominent personalities.

**Causes** This religious unrest is supposed by some to be the offspring of racial conflict and social disquiet. The Kshatriya origin of the two great Orders is interpreted as the revolt from Brahman domination of people of Tibeto Mongolian origin wedded to republicanism. The supposition of a conflict engendered by racial heterogeneity is needless, and that such differences did not exist between the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas is affirmed indirectly by Indian traditions. Regarding the social factor, the caste system was not rigid enough to provoke any revolt against it. As a matter of fact the Buddha aimed at no abolition of castes though he did not look at them from the point of view of Brahmanical orthodoxy. No crusade against caste was called for, nor was one attempted by Gautama. The true cause of religious ferment in the sixth century B C was neither racial nor social but religious. Religious dissent was promoted by the soulless sacrificial system laid down in the *karmalanda* of the *Vedas* which was not only magical and mystical and therefore meaningless, but entailed the shedding of innocent animal blood and troubled tender consciences. No doubt the Upanishadic way was different, but its abstruseness did not appeal to many. Desire causes existence, existence causes misery, the cure for misery is cessation of desire by true knowledge, true knowledge is comprehension of the reality that everything is *atman* (soul) and the *atman* is everything, all that seems to exist besides the *atman* is unreal. Therefore what was needed in the larger interests of the country was a short, easy and intelligible *yana* or way to *nirvana* or salvation for all people in this existence. This need was supplied by the Buddha and Mahavira by the introduction of the most necessary changes in the old religious system. The pessimistic view of life

and the doctrine of *karma* were accepted by them, but not the authority of the *Vedas* or of the Brahmins as spiritual guides. Salvation was aimed at not only for the Aryan but also for the *mlechchha* (non Aryan, literally a man of indistinct speech, corresponding exactly to the Greek sense of barbarian). Religious instruction was to be in public for men and women in a language known to them. Above all, a practical ethical code was to be substituted for *and ritualism and metaphysical subtlety*.

## SECTION II GAUTAMA BUDDHA

**Date of the Buddha :** c 567—c 487 B C. Though some scholars support the traditional date of the Buddha's *Parinibbana* (the great or final decease, as distinct from his deaths in previous births), 543 B C, the largely supported date falls between 488 and 477 B C. Dr Smith adhered to 487 B C for a long time, but finally accepted the traditional date. Dr Geiger suggests 483 B C, but is not against 487. Diwan Bahadur L. D. Swamikannu Pillai gives 'the true and exact day' of the Buddha's death as Tuesday, 1st April, 478 B C. Assuming 269 B C as the date of Asoka's coronation, we have merely to add to it the interval of 218 years between that event and the Buddha's decease, according to the Ceylonese chronicles. This date 487 B C is supported by "the dotted record" of Canton (China). Therefore, on the ground that the Buddha lived for eighty years, according to Buddhist tradition, we may get at his date of birth— $487+80=567$  B C.

**543 B C. Untenable** The traditional date 543 B C for the *Buddhanirvana* is supported by Dr Smith in a circuitous way. Assigning 165 B C for the fifth regnal year of Kharavela of Kalinga and accepting the identification of the Nanda king of the Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela with Nandivardhana, the latter who is said to have excavated a canal in Kalinga "three hundred years before" the fifth regnal year of Kharavela may be assigned to  $165+300=465$  B C. His initial date may be earlier than 465, say 470 B C. The *Puranas* give Udaya, the immediate predecessor of Nandivardhana, thirty three years of reign, Darsaka, twenty four years, Ajatasatru, twenty seven years, and Bimbisara,

twenty eight years Adding up we get  $470 + 33 + 24 + 27 + 28 = 582$  for the commencement of Bimbisara's reign and 554 for that of Ajatasatru's This, says Dr Smith, confirms the tradition of the Buddha's contemporaneity with both Bimbisara and Ajatasatru, and there is no improbability in placing the Buddha's decease in 543 B C But as the *Puranas* give discrepant reign periods, Dr Smith's combination of reign periods to prove his point is more subjective than objective The vital flaw in this chronological scheme is that placing Nandivardhana in 470 B C would cause an interval of  $470 - 325 = 145$  years between him and Chandragupta Maurya To allow one hundred and forty five years for Nandivardhana, Mahanandin and Mahapadma and his sons—four generations—is historiographically uncanonical Moreover, the expression "300 years before" in the Kharavela record is now read as "in the year 103 of the Nanda era" Therefore the attempt to back up the traditional date of the Buddha's death is futile Further the Saisunaga Nanda chronology is by no means certain The discrepancies between the *Puranas* and the Ceylonese chronicles as regards chronology and genealogy are hard to reconcile Though we prefer the Puranic authority, its chronology is clean untenable—three hundred and twenty one years for ten Saisunagas and one hundred years for two generations of Nandas We may allow only three hundred years for all the twelve generations, twenty five years for each reign On this basis (1) Sisunaga must have reigned from 625—600, (2) Kakavarna, 600—575, (3) Kshemadharman, 575—550, (4) Kshatraujas, 550—525, (5) Bimbisara, 525—500, (6) Ajatasatru, 500—475, (7) Darsaka, 475—450, (8) Udaya 450—425, (9) Nandivardhana, 425—400, (10) Mahanandin, 400—375, and (11 & 12) Mahapadma and his sons, 375—325 This conjectural chronology does not support 470 B C for Nandivardhana though it would harmonise with the traditional synchronism of the Buddha with Bimbisara and Ajatasatru

**His Career** The Buddha's life is so encrusted with legend that it is more difficult to obtain a historical picture of it than of his original teaching which has got mixed up with its subsequent transformation Scepticism occasionally goes to the extent of 'imagining a great commoner upon whom a

later grateful generation conferred the honour of Kshatriya hood. At any rate his story is no longer treated as a solar myth and his historicity is now fully recognised, the main outlines of his career being clear. Siddhartha Gautama, Sakyasimha or Sakyamuni was the son of Raja Sudhodana of the Sakya clan and Mayadevi. His mother dying seven days after his birth at Kapilavastu Mahaprajapati, Mayadevi's sister became his foster mother. In due course he married his cousin Yasodhara. The sights of an old man, a diseased man, a dead man and a saint turned his attention to the troubles and bondage of human life. The German philosopher, Nietzsche, ridicules the Buddha's sensitiveness to human misery as unmanly and un-Aryan.<sup>1</sup> The news of his son Rahula's birth was received by him with the remark that he had been bound by another chain. At the age of twenty nine years he abandoned the comforts of the palace and wandered from place to place in ascetic garb. After trying in vain two teachers he began serious penance under a fig tree (which became famous later as the Bodhi or Bo-tree) at a place called Bodhi Gaya later. After seven years of meditation he became enlightened and resisted the temptations of the Satanic Mara. He proceeded to Benares and delivered his first sermon which set in motion the *dhamma-chakka* or the Wheel of the Law. At Rajagriha he enlisted Sariputra and Maudgalyayana, then his cousins Ananda and Devadatta and subsequently Anuruddha and Upali, as his disciples. Ananda in due course became his other self, and Devadatta, a veritable thorn in his side. After strenuous endeavours for more than forty years he died at Kusinagara after partaking of the hospitality of a smith named Chunda. It is said that his death was caused by his consumption of pork at his last dinner, but the expression *sukaramaddata* usually translated as 'tender pork' is taken by some scholars to mean something relished by the boar, i.e., an edible fungus.

**His Doctrines** The four grand truths preached by the Buddha are (a) *Misery* Life is unredeemed misery, characterised as it is by sorrow, disease, old age and death, and so birth is misery. (b) *Origin of misery* The desire for carnal pleasures results in misery. (c) *Cessation of misery* Misery

is inevitable unless desire is rooted out (d) *The eight fold path* This is the means to secure freedom from desire and misery. It consists in (1) *Right belief* or belief in the four cardinal truths (2) *Right thought* or resolve to give up sensual pleasures and malice and to do no harm to any living being (3) *Right speech* is avoidance of falsehood, harshness and frivolity in talk (4) *Right action* is practice of *ahimsa* and refraining from theft and immorality (5) *Right livelihood* is choice of an occupation conducive to the fulfilment of the ideal (6) *Right exertion* is strenuous endeavour to avoid evil and develop good qualities (7) *Right watchfulness* is vigilance against lust and grief (8) *Right meditation* is concentrated thinking to reach the goal. To sum up, salvation is to be obtained by faith in the Buddha's teaching developed by vigorous effort to understand and practise it and by a strictly moral life coupled with meditation. The eight fold path is called the middle path as it is mid way between the two extremes of sensuality and bodily torture. The Buddha did not emphasise asceticism and *ahimsa* to any absurd extent as he learned the lesson of moderation from his own experience. He concentrated on the practical problem of salvation rather than on the discovery of ultimate truth. So he discouraged fruitless speculation regarding the soul, the absolute etc.

**The Sangha** The Buddha organized a body of disciples to spread his teaching to preach and convert, and the well disciplined Sangha or Order became later an efficient instrument of religious conquest. He admitted women into the Order with some reluctance, and his decision in their favour contributed much to the elevation of their status and was fully justified by their commendable activity to some extent reflected in the *Therigatha* (Songs of the Sisters). Though he allowed them a large measure of freedom, he subjected them to the control of monks. Though nuns were not unknown before his time it was he who gave a fillip to the movement of their equality in spiritual effort. Above all by his strenuous pure and noble life, he set a grand example to humanity. His personality and genius gave splendid survival value to his gospel which in some respects appeals strongly

to the modern scientific mind. The eight fold path was common to all but the monks and nuns were to strive for something much higher than that, and intensive pursuit of the ideal was possible only for those who had given up worldly life and joined the Order. The higher standard for them consisted in absolute chastity, minimum of creature comforts and their strict regulation, and avoidance of amusements like singing and dancing, and of luxuries like scents, flowers, ornaments and fine beds. Their possessions were restricted to yellow rags, belts, begging bowls, razors, and needles to mend their clothes, and it was the duty of the laity to support them and come into contact with them.

**Caste** Though all castes were admitted into the Sangha and the caste system was not encouraged, there was no obliteration of caste distinctions among the clergy. No holy war was preached against the Brahmanical social system. Though the caste organization was not much affected by the Buddha's advent, the indirect consequences of his democratic outlook cannot be forgotten. Whatever the degree of his success in minimising the importance of castes, his broad vision was a great stimulus and a grand prophecy. As the social system was not rigid and tyrannical in his days, he had not much scope for directing his energy against it.

**Reform versus Revolution** Though the Buddha was a revolutionary in some respects, his fundamental aim was religious reform from the popular point of view. He accepted many doctrines of Brahmanism, and in the organisation of his Order, incorporated many features of the existing Order of Sannyasins or ascetics. His emphasis on self effort, reason and ethics was to some extent novel, but his reliance on the *Upanishads* and on the Sankhya and Yoga philosophical systems is patent. The Sankhya stresses reason and discards revelation. The Buddha was not an atheist, though he denied the authority of the *Vedas*. Brahmanical orthodoxy embraced the atheistic Mimamsaka and the rationalist Sankhya without faith in the *Vedas*, but called the Buddha an atheist though he never denied the existence of gods, it defined the terms

*nastika* and *astika* inconsistently, tolerated its allies, and spiteed "the grand rebel" The success of the Buddha though limited, was due to his personality, self sacrifice, energy, principles and doctrines—he lived at a time when a religious change was the crying need of the hour—and to the position he occupied as a Kshatriya prince in a world which had witnessed Kshatriya vitality in the military and philosophical realms of Indian activity.

### SECTION III MAHAVIRA VARDHAMANA

**Date of Mahavira :** c 539—c 467 B C Dr Smith accepts the traditional date of Mahavira's *nirvana*, 470 years before the Vikrama era, i.e.,  $470 + 57 = 527$  B C, for the reasons adduced for his acceptance of the traditional date of the Buddha's death, seeing that tradition makes the Buddha and Mahavira contemporaries Rejecting 527 B C. for the reasons already explained, the grounds for Dr Jacobi's suggestion, 467 B C, accepted by Dr Charpentier, may be regarded as satisfactory

**527 B C**      Untenable  
**467 B C**      Convincing

(a) According to a Jain tradition recorded by Hemachandra, the Jain polyhistor of the 12th century A D, there was an interval of 410 years between Mahavira and the Vikrama era (58—57 B C) Therefore Mahavira must have died in  $57 + 410 = 467$  B C But he is also placed 155 years before Chandragupta Maurya If 155 is deducted from 467, we get 312 B C for Chandragupta's accession, for which such a late date is untenable (b) Another Jain tradition mentions 170 years as the interval between Mahavira's death and that of Bhadrabahu, the Jain patriarch The latter is closely associated in Jain Literature with Chandragupta Maurya, who is said to have abdicated and migrated to Mysore along with his *guru*, Bhadrabahu The pontiff died a little after the Jain settlement in the South So on the basis of Chandragupta's abdication in  $325 - 24 = 301$  B C, and allowing a few years for the Jain migration from Northern India and settlement in Mysore, say four years, we may fix  $301 - 4 = 297$  B C for Bhadrabahu's death Therefore Mahavira must have left this world in  $297 + 170 = 467$  B C (c) The *Jainacharita* of the *Kalpasutra* mentions its compilation nine hundred and ninety-

three years after Mahavira, and its public recital, after its completion before Dhruvasena I of Valabhi. As he ascended the throne in 526 A.D., Mahavira must have expired in  $993 - 526 = 467$  B.C. The tradition that he lived for seventy two years enables us to place his birth in  $467 + 72 = 539$  B.C.

437 B.C.  
Unacceptable

A third date for Mahavira's decease is suggested by the tradition that it happened four hundred and seventy years before the Vikrama era which in this case, it is argued should be regarded as

Ananda Vikrama era starting in 33 A.D., i.e., ninety years (the total of the reign periods of the Nandas, according to the Hindi poet Chand) after the Sa'nanda Vikrama era (58—57 B.C.). Therefore Mahavira must have attained *nirvana* in  $470 - 33 = 437$  B.C. But such a late date is opposed to the persistent tradition that Mahavira was contemporary with Bimbisara and Ajatasatru.

**His Life** The life of Mahavira handed down to us is so legendary and to some extent so similar to the life of the Buddha that we cannot attach much value to the details. He was born at Kundagrama, a suburb of the town of Vaisali, son of Siddhartha and Trisala. As his father was the leader of the *gnatrika* clan of Kshatriyas, the 'Buddhists refer to Vardhamana as *Nataputta*. He married Yasoda, and after the birth of a daughter, turned his attention away from profane things. His homeless life began at thirty after the death of his parents, and twelve years were devoted to rigorous penance, in the course of which he realised the spiritual value of self torture and nudity. In his forty second year he reached omniscience and became the *Jina* (the conqueror) or Mahavira (the great hero). Then began his career as a preacher, and his followers were called *nugranthas* (those who have broken the worldly ties). During the remaining thirty years of his life, the sphere of his activity was Magadha and Anga, and occasionally other chief centres of civilization in Northern India. He came into close contact with Bimbisara and Ajatasatru, and after much struggle inside his Order, and outside with the Buddha and his followers, he died at Pawa near Rajagriha twenty years after the Buddha's demise. His religion is called *Jainism* though, on the analogy of Buddhism, it should be called 'Jinism,' or on the analogy of Jainism we should speak of "Buddhism."



**Jain Doctrines and Organisation.** The *triratna* (three jewels) of Jainism—right faith, right knowledge and right conduct—corresponds to the Buddhist eight fold path, not to the Buddhist *triratna*—the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. Right faith is firm belief in the omniscience and infallibility of Mahavira. Right knowledge is comprehension of the theory that there is no God and that the world has always been existing without a Creator, together with the recognition of the existence of innumerable independent souls, of the validity of the doctrine of *karma*, and of the capacity of asceticism to destroy *karma*. Right conduct for the clergy is scrupulous fulfilment, in thought, word and deed, of the five great vows—not to injure life, not to lie, not to steal, not to perform the sexual act, and not to be selfish, rich or worldly—supplemented by positive conduct conducive to self discipline, confession, humility, obedience, meditation and study. For the laity the injunction is to avoid flagrant violation of the *ahimsa* doctrine, gross untruth, theft and robbery, adultery and greed, with which are coupled a few positive directions—protection of living creatures, careful choice of occupation—even agriculture is sinful as it causes injury to the earth, worms and animals—, practice of charity and voluntary starvation. Even inanimate things are invested with the soul animism, ascetic ways are pursued with a vengeance, and the *ahimsa* principle is carried to the extent of undervaluing human personality. In these three respects Jainism occupies an extreme position. Its Sangha consists of the clergy and laity of both sexes. This organic social bond is a master stroke of Mahavira's genius for organisation. In prosperity and adversity the clergy enjoyed the unstinted support of the laity. The Jain Order was however, not organised with a single eye to propaganda though conversion was its objective.

**Mahavira as Reformer** Mahavira, the twenty fourth *Tirthankara* (Path finder or Prophet) was the reformer of the sect of Parsva, who is said to have lived two hundred and fifty years before Vardhamana. Though he was the Buddha's junior contemporary, the religion reformed by him is regarded as older than Parsva, the twenty third *Tirthankara* and the real founder of Jainism, which is therefore more ancient than Buddhism. Mahavira differed from his immediate predecessor

in his emphasis on absolute chastity and nudity. But when he became pontiff he seems to have moderated his extreme views regarding nudity. Though Jainism and Buddhism agree on many points, their fundamental differences cannot be overlooked, Jainism stands mid way between Brahmanism and Buddhism.

#### SECTION IV. SOURCES

**Chief Sources** For the period, 600—325 B C, our almost exclusive reliance is on indigenous literature except for India's contact with foreign powers. The *Sutras* belong partly to this age. Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain traditions together with the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya are supplemented for internal history by scanty references in foreign authorities. External history is dependent on non Indian sources. The Hathigumpha inscription of the second century B C throws some light on pre Mauryan India.

**The Puranas** The *panchalakshanas* (five characteristics) of the *Puranas* are *sarga* (creation of the world), *praty sarga* (recreation), *vamsa* (genealogy of gods and saints), *manvantara* (ages of Manu) and *vamsanucharita* (dynastic history). The penultimate and last items are concerned with geography and history respectively. Thus, to some extent, the *Puranas* are professedly historical documents, supplying us with royal genealogy and reign periods along with a few historical facts, from the very beginning to the age of the Guptas. They use the past, present and future tenses in the narration of events. Dr Smith has shown the historical value of the *Matsya Purana* with regard to the Satavahana dynasty. But owing to textual corruptions they make inconsistent statements. Sometimes they treat contemporary dynasties as successive, and do not discriminate between major and minor powers. Moreover, they were composed in the Gupta epoch. They omit a few dynasties like the Kushans and the Kshatrapas. Above all they allow an interval of about 2500 years between the Mauryas and the Guptas—an error evidently due to the confusion between contemporary and successive dynasties. But their testimony is sometimes corroborated by Buddhist and Jain traditions and by archaeological evidence. Still it is

going too far to regard the *Puranas* as historical records of independent value. But Pargiter argues that they are generally trustworthy on the ground that the Pauranikas (then authors) could distinguish between truth and untruth, that it would be unbelievable if the memory of great kings had been entirely lost among a civilized people, and that ancient Indian genealogists could be trusted to have preserved royal genealogies with substantial accuracy if the Brahmans could preserve the *Vedas* with verbal accuracy. He lays down the dictum that the Puranic tradition is to be rejected, if at all, on specific grounds and for valid reasons, as its general credibility is unassailable. But this is the criterion we apply to first rate historical materials. In the present condition of Puranic study, we cannot regard their data as such materials. Still, as Rapson observes, "the *Puranas* have preserved, in however perverted and distorted a form, an independent tradition, which supplements the priestly tradition of the *Vedas* and the *Brahmanas*, and which goes back to the same period."

### The Saisunaga-Nanda Genealogy and Chronology.

The *Puranas* give us vague traditions of Vedic genealogy, claiming for kings lunar and solar descent, which cannot be harmonised with Vedic traditions until the reign of Parikshit, who is placed about thirty six years after the Mahabharata war (about 1000 B. C.) After this war, three dynasties are continued—the Purus, the Ikshvakus and the rulers of Magadha. The value of the *Puranas* increases with the advent of the Saisunagas of Magadha. Of the three lists of these kings Puranic, Buddhist and Jain, the last is incomplete, and the other two reveal such fundamental discrepancies that it is very trying to reconcile their genealogical and chronological data. In this connection the superiority on general grounds of Northern Indian tradition to Ceylonese Buddhist tradition should be recognised. We have to choose between two defective lists and scholars are ranged on either side. Taking all the data into consideration we have to decide our preference.

and adjust the chronology accordingly. The data may be tabulated as follows —

THE MATSYA PURANA			THE CEYLONESE CHRONICLES		
S No	KING	REIGN PERIOD YEARS	S No	KING	REIGN PERIOD YEARS
1	Sisunaga	40	1	Bimbisara	52
2	Kakavarna	26	2	Ajatasatru	32
3	Kshemadharman	36	3	Udayin	16
4	Kshatraujas	24	4	Anuruddha	} 8
5	Bimbisara	28	5	Munda	
6	Ajatasatru	27	6	Nagadasaka	24
7	Darsaka	24	7	Sisunaga	18
8	Udayin	33	8	Kalasoka	28
9	Nandivardhana	40	9	His ten sons	20
10	Mahanandin	43	10	Nine Nandas	22
11	Mahapadma	88			
12	His eight sons	12			
		Total			421
					222

**Criticism** Sisunaga Bimbisara Ajatasatru and the nine Nandas are common to both lists. Kakavarna may be identified with Kalasoka and Darsaka with Nagadasaka. It is improper to doubt the historicity of names which do not sound well like Kalasoka (Black Asoka), Kakavarna (crow coloured) and Munda (shaveling). In both lists Bimbisara is followed by Ajatasatru and Sisunaga by Kakavarna or Kalasoka, the Nandas coming last. But the founder of the dynasty is Sisunaga in one case and Bimbisara in the other. The reference by Banu to Kakavarna Sisunaga supports the Puranic statement. The total of the reign periods is markedly different, the Puranic average is about thirty five years for each king and the Buddhist about twenty years. The Puranic list gives eleven names and a group of eight brothers the other list eight names a group of ten brothers and another group of nine, nineteen against twenty seven in all, from this point of view the average is twenty two years as against eight years. Therefore the Buddhist figure is too low. Further in the Puranic and Buddhist lists Sisunaga gets forty and eighteen years respectively, Kakavarna Kalasoka twenty six and twenty eight, Bimbisara twenty eight and fifty two, Ajatasatru twenty seven and thirty two and Udayin thirty three and sixteen, but Darsaka Nagadasaka, twenty four in both. Regarding the Nandas the

discrepancy is abnormal—hundred in one case and twenty two in the other. With reference to the Buddhist list, Dr Rhys Davids remarks "It must be confessed that the numbers seem much too regular, with their multiples of six and eight, to be very probably in accordance with fact"\* Further, the story of a line of five parricides from Ajatasatru to Nagadasaka tends to discredit that list. The historicity of Darsaka, doubted by some Buddhist scholars, is vouched for by Bhasa's *Svapna-vasavadatta*. Therefore the Puranic list is to be preferred on account of its Northern Indian origin, its fuller enumeration of royal names, and its accuracy regarding the founder of the dynasty, though four centuries cannot be allowed for twelve generations. On an average of twenty five years for each reign, three hundred years would not be unreasonable. Numbers nine to twelve of the Puranic list cover nearly two centuries, and there must be a serious error here. The Hindi poet, Chand, allows about ninety years for the Nandas, and we may assign a hundred years to the four generations from Nandivardhana, regarding him as a Nanda. The only way out of the difficulty seems to be to accept the Puranic genealogy and allow twenty five years for each king and another twenty five years for the eight sons of Mahapadma. This conjectural chronology has already been given. The *Puranas* further help us with a few important facts in connection with the political ascendancy of Magadha, and describe Mahapadma as an *ekarat* or emperor.

**The Buddhist and Jain Literature.** The Buddhist and Jain canonical literature, though put into shape much later is of primary value for the origin and early history of the heterodox sects. It throws much light on social and economic conditions, and affords occasional glimpses into political life. The Buddhist sacred text available is the Ceylonese Pali version which came into existence in the first century B.C. The *Tripitaka* consists of three "baskets" or testaments, and excluding the commentaries and the frequent repetitions, is as bulky as the Bible. The *Vinayapitaka* is concerned with monastic discipline and describes the rules intended for the observance and guidance of monks and nuns.

The *Suttapitaka* contains the sermons of the Buddha and his chief disciples to the laity, and is a popular exposition of the *Dhamma* or the Law. A valuable account of the closing years of the Buddha is given in the *Mahaparimbhanasutta*, dealing with the great decease of the Master. The *Dhammapada* a collection of select ethical precepts, is a popular introduction to Buddhism. The *Theragatha* and the *Therigatha*, (Songs of the Brethren and Sisters) reveal the personal religious experiences of monks and nuns respectively. Above all, the most popular *Jatalas*, forming an appendix to the canon describe the innumerable previous lives of the Buddha. These five hundred and fifty stories constitute 'a thesaurus of Indian antiquities state and private,' and are of primary importance for the study of economic and social history. Their contents are referred to the age of the Buddha by Dr Fick and to the pre Buddhist period by Dr Rhys Davids. The third and last division of the canon, the *Abhidhammapitaka* is a detailed and highly technical exposition of the *Dhamma*. It is the basis of Buddhist psychological and philosophical studies. The non canonical *Diparamsa* and *Maharamsa* composed in the fourth and sixth centuries A D respectively, jointly called the Ceylonese Chronicles, sketch the dynastic and religious history of Ceylon and refer to political and religious conditions in Northern India. They are no longer summarily dismissed as monkish inventions because of their dependence on earlier chronicles. The Jain *Agama* or canon consists of the eleven *Angas* and other works. The *Acharanga* gives a full exposition of the right conduct for the clergy and the *Upasalanga* for the laity. The *Pattavalis*, or succession lists of the chief pontiffs, were compiled in the fifth century A D but based on older materials. The traditions embodied in the voluminous writings of the Jain monk, Hemachandra, are occasionally useful. It is unfair to level the charge of sectarian prejudice exclusively against Brahmanical, Buddhist or Jain chronicles of Indian tradition.

**Foreign Evidence** Besides the inscriptions of Darius I, elucidating his connection with North Western India, Herodotus, Alexander's historians, and Megasthenes have to some

extent filled the gap in Indian evidence though for internal affairs it is only occasionally that they are helpful

## SECTION V POLITICAL INTEGRATION IN NORTHERN INDIA

**Kingdoms and Republics Sixth Century B C** The casual references to the political condition of Northern India in early Buddhist Literature reveal a state of affairs similar to the political situation at about the same period in Greece. The chief kingdoms were Kosala, Magadha, Avanti and Vatsa, until the balance of power was disturbed by the ascendancy of Magadha. The triumph of the policy of absorption of neighbouring territories is the background of Kautilya's *Arthashastra*. There were a number of republican tribes, the Vajjiyas including the Licchhavis and the Videhans, the Sakyas, the Moriyas etc. on the Northern and Western borders of the major monarchies. Only scraps of information are available regarding their administration. The head of the republic was an elected chief called Raja, corresponding to the Greek *archon* or president. The assembly of the citizens freely discussed matters administrative and judicial and the discussions were conducted in a regular manner, the decisions being duly recorded. It is not clear whether there was voting. In cases of lack of unanimity, the question at issue was referred to a committee of arbitration. Some authors compare the Indian assemblies to modern Parliaments. Local affairs were managed on more or less the same lines. The Buddha, a firm believer in republican institutions, assured the Licchhavis that they would not come to grief if their faith in free institutions continued undiminished.

**Bimbisara c 525—c 500 B C** Sisunaga created a chieftaincy at Girivraja (Old Rajagriha) near Gaya, and Bana refers to the tragic death of Kakavarna, but we know next to nothing about the predecessors of Bimbisara, who laid truly and well the foundations of Magadhan political ascendancy. His success was partly due to the initiative taken by the Sisunaga before him in the conquest of Anga. He secured allies on his Northern and Western frontiers, his marriage with a Licchhavi princess was followed by another marriage

with a Kosala princess whose dowry was the Kasi region. With his strength thus augmented, he defeated Brahmadatta of Anga, annexed the kingdom and appointed<sup>c</sup> his son, Ajatasatru, to govern it from Champa. He was on amicable terms with Malwa and Gandhara. Thus by diplomacy and war he started Magadha on its imperial career. He was a capable administrator who exercised effective control over his *mahamatras* or principal officers. A new Rajagriha (Rajgr, near the town of Bihar) was built by him, though Fa hien mentions Ajatasatru as its founder. He is regarded as a Jain and a benefactor of Jainism in spite of his admiration for the Buddha. During his reign probably the Indus Valley was conquered by Darius I, the able and ambitious Achaemenian emperor.

**Ajatasatru: c 500—c 475 B C** It is not certain whether Ajatasatru's mother was the Lichchhavi or Kosala princess married by his father. The Buddhist story of his sending his father to the other world at the instance of Devadatta is rejected by Dr Smith as an instance of the perversion of history by theological rancour. Though there is nothing inherently improbable in the allegation, particularly when Devadatta, the enemy of the Buddha, is incriminated, a doubt creeps in caused by the explanation of the name of Ajatasatru as one who was, even before his birth, his father's enemy—a piece of perverted etymology. Further, the four successors of Ajatasatru down to Nagadasaka are also regarded as parricides, and all the five are treated by the Buddhists as members of a patricidal dynasty, which was overthrown by the conscience stricken people who chose the minister Sisunaga to rule over them, eighty years after the first parricide. Ajatasatru seems to have patronised the two leading prophets of his age. His aggressive policy of territorial expansion appears to have provoked a great combination against him of Kosala and Vaisali, which he required about sixteen years to subdue. The fall of the great republic is said to have been caused by the Kautilyan method of creating divisions among the people. The annexation of the leading kingdom of Kosala and of the confederate republic added immensely to the strength and prestige of Ajatasatru. During his wars he had fortified Pataligrama.



(later Pataliputra) whose strategical importance was appreciated by that daring imperialist. It would be a great gain to knowledge if Dr K P Jayaswal's surmise were well founded that the Parkham (near Mathura) statue is that of Ajatasatru, who may be regarded as the precursor of the great imperialist, Chandragupta Maurya. During this reign happened the massacre of the Sakyas, and the first Buddhist council was held at Rajagriha soon after the Buddha's decease about 487 B C.

**Darsaka: c 475—c 450 and Udayin c 450,—c 425** Darsaka was the son and successor of Ajatasatru, but the *Mahabimsa* puts Udayin in his place. His historicity is proved by Bhasa's *Svapnavasavadatta*, which establishes his contemporaneity with Udayana of Vatsa and Mahasena of Avanti. If he were identical with Nagadasaka, he would be the last of the parricidal line, superseded after a reign of twenty-four years by the elected minister-king Sisunaga, according to the Buddhist story. Mahavira died probably during this reign. Udayin, the next ruler, is well remembered for his foundation of the city of Pataliputra (Pushpapura or Kusumapura) at the junction of the Ganges and the Son. Avanti, by its annexation of the Vatsa kingdom of Kausambi, became a danger to Magadha, but the final conflict between the two powers was postponed. Dr K P Jayaswal's identification of one of the "Patna statues" with that of Udayin is unproven.

### **The Nanda Empire: Nandivardhana c 425—c 400**

The period from Nandivardhana, the successor of Udayin, to the advent of the Mauryas is covered by two generations of Saisunagas and two generations of Nandas, according to the *Puranas*, which indicate no dynastic gap between them but only a religious and social hiatus. Therefore they should be treated as a single dynasty. The last two Saisunagas should be bracketed with the Nandas *prima facie* on the similarity of their names. Dr K P Jayaswal's interpretation of *Nava nanda* as Neo-Nandas or Later Nandas, as distinct from *Purvananda* or Early Nandas, is not tenable as the *Puranas* and the *Mahabimsa* distinctly speak of nine Nandas. The Hathigumpha inscription is now read, not as postulating a Nanda three hundred years before Kharavela, but as referring

to a Nanda era. To regard Nandivardhana as a Nanda we must seek elsewhere. Alberuni mentions besides the well known Harsha era of the seventh century A D a Harsha era four hundred years before Vikrama (58—57 B C) that is in the fifth century B C. As the words *nanda* and *harsha* are identical in meaning an allusion to the era of Nandavardhana or Nandivardhana is clear. Moreover an inscription of Vikramaditya VI Chalukya (1076—1127 A D) refers apparently to a Nanda era. As there is some difficulty in taking Nandivardhana to 458—7 B C according to our conjectural chronology the period of four hundred years may be interpreted less strictly. It is not possible to place him in the fourth century B C. He may be assigned to the last quarter of the fifth century or to an earlier period seeing that the *Puranas* give him a reign period of forty years. So it is practically certain that Nandivardhana is to be reckoned as a Nanda, though the orthodox Pauranikas separated him and his successor, Mahanandin from the 'unholy' Nandas Mahapadma and his sons. Therefore Nandivardhana may be regarded as the inaugurator of the Nanda era. Further he is credited with the extinction of the Pradyota dynasty of Malwa. Whether he conquered Kalinga is more than we can say in the light of the revised reading of the Kharavela epigraph. That he was an emperor is further supported by his statue with the inscription 'Vartanandi of universal dominion', even Vaidhana may be regarded as an imperial title.

**Mahapadma Nanda** • c 375—c 350. That the Nandas were an imperial power is indicated by the city, Nau Nanda Dehra, on the Godavari. Mysore inscriptions of the twelfth century A D allude to them as rulers of Kuntala. The *Arthashastra* of Kautilya mentions 'the scriptures and the science of weapons and the earth which had passed to the Nanda king'. The *Mudrarakshasa* of Visakhadatta ascribes an imperial position to the Nandas. The Greek and Latin authors describe the Prasii or East Indians as one great people. On the eve of Alexander's invasion of the Panjab, Magadha was the paramount power in the Gangetic Valley. The conquest of Kalinga by the Nandas and the removal of a Jain image from there to Northern India are clear from the Hathigumpha inscription of

Kharavela, thus showing that the Nanda conqueror of Kalinga was a Jain. Above all the *Puranas* describe Mahapadma as *sarvashat<sup>a</sup>antaka* (destroyer of all Kshatriyas) *ekarat* (sole monarch) and *ekachchhatra* (one bringing all kings under one umbrella). We do not know who dislodged the Achæmenids from the Indus Valley perhaps Mahapadma. So it appears that Nandivardhana was the first Nanda emperor whose activities prepared the way for the thorough going imperialism of Mahapadma. But reliance on the *Mahatamsa* leads not only to the insertion of Sisunaga in the middle of the genealogical list, but also to the division of really one dynasty into three—the Bimbisara Saisunaga and Nanda dynasties—and to the attribution of the conquest of Malwa and the extinction of the Pradyotas to Sisunaga. Mr. Rychaudhuri\* solves the chronological problem by adding the reign periods given in the *Mahatamsa* to 323 B.C. Bimbisara, 545—493, Ajatashatru, 493—461, Udayin, 461—445, Anuruddha and Munda, 445—437, Nagadasaka, 437—413, Sisunaga, 413—395, Kalasoka, 395—367, his ten sons, 367—345, and the nine Nandas, 345—323 B.C. He, however, recognises the imperial position of Mahapadma in accordance with the Puranic statement.

**Decline and Fall of the Nandas** It seems that the conquest of Kalinga was temporary and that the successors of Mahapadma lost it as it was no part of Chandragupta Maurya's empire, and as Asoka had to conquer it afresh. The fiscal system became oppressive, and weights and measures were overhauled. The fabulous wealth of the Nandas—the last of the line was named Dhana Nanda—is alluded to by Greek writers and Mamulanai, the Tamil poet of the Sangam age. Their unpopularity is equally clear and might have been further due to their being *Sudrabhis* (descended from a Sudra) patronising the heterodox Jainism. But an *anuloma* marriage (marriage of a high caste male with a low caste woman) could never be regarded as scandalous from the point of view of the age. According to the Greek story, the last Nanda was the son of a barber. The *Arjya Manjusri Mulakalpa*, a late Buddhist work in the style of the *Puranas* calls Mahapadma *Nichamukhya* (the chief among base men) and

\* *op cit* pp 181—86.

regards him as the Prime Minister of his predecessor. What ever may be the cause of their unpopularity, the military strength of the Nandas is beyond doubt, and Alexander's soldiers were influenced by reports of the huge and efficient Magadha army, consisting of not less than 20 000 horse 200 000 foot, 2,000 chariots and three to six thousand elephants. The Nanda empire was seized by Chandragupta Maurya after the violent overthrow of the dynasty about 325 B. C.

**Causes of Imperial Triumph** The advance of political integration in the heart of Northern India during the two centuries preceding the Mauryan revolution is coeval with the expansion and decline of the Achaemenian Empire. The success of the Indian movement was due to the existence of a number of enterprising and ambitious monarchs like Bimbisara, Ajatasatru, Nandivardhana and Mahapadma Nanda, who did not scruple to employ Kautilyan devices to achieve success. Geographical factors like extensive and rich riverine regions facilitated their task, but these factors had always been there. The stimulus of foreign rule in North Western India might not have been a negligible factor. The eminence of the Mauryas in many fields should be viewed in the light of the achievements of the Saisunaga Nanda period of Indian History. Along with political integration progressed political differentiation, the advance of which is reflected in the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya.

#### SECTION VI IRANIAN PENETRATION

**Cyrus the Great and Darius I** That there was a period of Indo Iranian unity, followed by an age of commercial intercourse between the separated Iranian and Indo Aryan peoples, is generally recognised. With the foundation of the Achaemenian Empire closer relations developed between Iran and India. Cyrus the great (558—530 B. C.) conquered Gandhara. Cambyzes (530—522 B. C.) was too busy with Egypt to think of Indian conquest. Darius I (522—486 B. C.) the great conqueror and organiser, annexed the Panjab and Sindh to his far flung empire, and constituted the 20th Satrapy of India—the total number of provinces being between twenty and twenty eight. His Behistun inscription (519 B. C.) does not mention the Panjab and Sindh, whereas his Hamadan record, indited before 515 B. C. refers to the Indian province. As

Darius was in Egypt in 518 and 517, Prof. Herzfeld thinks that the Indus Valley must have been conquered in 516 B.C. The Indian Satrapy consisted of Sindh, a part of the North West Frontier Province, and a large portion of the Panjab. It was the most fertile and populous fragment of the Achaemenian Empire, paying a tribute of about a million sterling, one third of the revenues of the Asiatic provinces. The naval expedition of Skylax down the Indus was undertaken probably subsequent to the Indian conquest. The death of Darius before he could avenge the defeat of his army at Marathon in 490 B.C. by Athens removed a great danger to Greece and India. "He ranks very high among the greatest Aryans of history."\*

**Xerxes and Artaxerxes II** Xerxes (486—465 B.C.) secured the co-operation of his Indian province in his invasion of Greece. Herodotus gives some account of the Indian infantry and cavalry which participated in the battle of Plataea (479 B.C.) and retreated from Greece after the disastrous and decisive Achaemenian defeat in that battle. The success of Athens and Sparta in crowning Xerxes with disgrace marks the decline of the great empire, founded by Cyrus and extended and organised with wonderful efficiency by Darius I. After the failure of the Achaemenids against Greece, they could follow no forward policy in India. The fortunes of the Indian province after the death of Xerxes are obscure. That Achaemenian authority in the Indus Valley remained intact till the end of the last Achaemenid, Darius III, in 330 B.C. is not probable. The political conditions which confronted Alexander the Great in North Western India would suggest the overthrow of Iranian domination some appreciable time before his advent. Moreover he did not encounter Iranian officials east of the Hindu Kush, Dr. W. W. Tarn says that "the Indian provinces were finally lost in the reign of Artaxerxes II" (405—358 B.C.)

**Effects of the Conquest** It would be surprising if the political contact lasting for more than 100 years did not affect India. Besides giving an impetus to Indo-Iranian

\* Sir P. Sykes, *A History of Persia* (1930) I p. 194

† W. W. Tarn, *The Greeks in Bactria and India* (1938) p. 130

commerce and preparing the way for Alexander's invasion the Achaemenian domination was responsible for the prevalence of the Kharoshthi script in North Western India till the third century A D. Though foreign influence on the punch marked coins of India is doubtful it was undeniably exerted on Mauryan sculpture. In other ways as well the Iranian connection with India proved to be more fruitful than the short lived Indo Macedonian contact.

## c SECTION VII "THE GREAT EMATHIAN CONQUEROR"

### Antecedents of the Macedonian Conqueror

Alexander the Great the son and successor of Philip II of Macedonia was born in 356 B C and trained from the age of thirteen to that of sixteen by Aristotle "the master of those that know". He loved the sword and the *Iliad* of Homer best, and developed a love for war and learning. He became King of Macedonia (of which the plain of Emathia was a part and hence the phrase the great Emathian conqueror of Milton) at twenty, consequent on the assassination of his father at the instigation of his fierce mother. Though he obtained the best military and literary education of the age he was brought up at a court notoriously loose in morals, and had inherited a terrible temper from his mother. Still he exhibited a lofty morality (his latest biographer emphasises this trait in his character), was chivalrous to women, hated meanness, and scorned to steal a victory. He was remarkable for personal courage, and his love of Greek culture was inordinate. At his accession to the throne, he became heir to the fruits of his father's manifold and fertile activity for over twenty years, he inherited a strong and unified kingdom with its hegemony over Greece well established, and a thoroughly organised and up-to-date army. His father had not realised his aim of Asiatic conquest, which Alexander took up after quelling a Greek rebellion. His

Ecbatana in 330 brought his original plan of campaign to a successful termination. Now he aimed at further conquest eastwards and thought of recovering the lost Achaemenian Satrapy of India. His character changed for the worse, and his cruelty and vanity increased. He had already set fire to the palace of Xerxes at the suggestion of Thais, his famous Athenian concubine. He now executed his veteran general, massacred a Greek colony in Bactria, and killed his own foster-brother who had been the saviour of his life. Though he did some unjustifiable things justifying the phrase 'Macedonia's madman' he felt remorse for all his lapses from the right path. It was perhaps at this stage of his life that he dreamed the noble dream of uniting the Asiatics and the Macedonians into one people by means of common military service, intermarriage and Greek culture. He founded many Alexandrias to promote trade, culture and cosmopolitan intercourse. In spite of opposition from his compatriots he worked sincerely for the realisation of his ideal of the unity of mankind. Though he failed to achieve his noble ambition, his magnificent vision of a united humanity made him truly great. "The greatest thing about him is that he was the pioneer of one of the supreme revolutions in the world's outlook, the first man known to us who contemplated the brotherhood of man. He was a philosopher."\*

**Causes of his Invasion of India.** We have mentioned that Alexander's invasion of India was an afterthought. Neither his father nor he when leaving Pella, his capital, thought of penetrating into India. The idea of regaining the lost satrapy as heir to Darius III might be harmonised with that of a pan-Hellenic crusade against Iran and India for their part in the invasion of Greece under Xerxes. Herodotus and other authors had familiarised the West with a fabulously wealthy and mysterious India, containing men and things out of the range of ordinary human experience. Alexander's spirit of geographical enquiry and his passion for natural history, imbibed from his tutor, influenced his decision to invade India, and he believed that on the eastern side of India, there was

\* W. W. Tarn in the *Proceedings of the British Academy* (1933), p. 148.

the continuation of the Caspian Sea the eastern boundary of the world according to the geographical conceptions of his age

**Condition of North Western India.** 'In North Western India there were princes and princelings and republican clans with a fierce love of autonomy. The leading kings were Ambhi of Taxila the ruler of Abhisara who thought of playing a double game against Alexander, and Poros the tallest of them all (literally and figuratively) the hero of the Indo-Macedonian struggle next to Alexander. Nysa between the Kabul river and the Indus was a republic with a President and a Senate of 300 members. The Katharoi between the Jhelum and the Chinab were famous for warlike qualities. The Siboi, below the confluence of the Jhelum and the Chinab were clad in skins and used clubs. The Oxydrakoi or the Kshudraka between the Ravi and the Bias were a numerous and warlike people. The Malloi or Malavas were soldiers by profession. The Abastanoi or Ambashtha possessed a strong army and a democratic government. The kingdom of Mousikhanos in Sindh worked institutions similar to those of Sparta and Crete. Brahman influence there kindled the revolt against Alexander. Patalene like Sparta was ruled by two hereditary kings, but the Senate was all in all. Though North Western India was the most disunited part of India and though the princes and tribes were at war with one another and could never hang together for common purposes it was not easy to overcome so many sources of opposition. It was not a question of a single pitched battle followed by the acquisition of an extensive empire by the victor.

### **Alexander's Movements in the Indus Valley**

Alexander's march from the Hindu Kush began in May, 327 B.C., and the reduction of the wild tribes was so thorough that his home communications were well secured. After ten months devoted to the hill campaigns he crossed the Indus in February 326 and proceeded to Taxila where he was given a public reception. From there he marched to the bank of the Jhelum and saw the army of Poros on the other side of the river, which he crossed stealthily and flung a surprise on his enemy. The famous battle of the Jhelum or Hydaspes was fought in 'the Karni plain



**Effects of the Invasion** The effects of Alexander's invasion of India were disproportionate to the magnitude of his achievement and to his greatness and aims. He intended to attach North Western India to his empire politically and culturally. But his great effort was rendered nugatory quite at the beginning by his untimely death. It was his misfortune rather than his fault that his conquest of India proved to be less stable than that of Darius I. The extinction of his authority in the Indus Valley, a few years after its establishment nipped his great cultural experiment in the bud. The work of healing and settlement could not be done during his 19 months' sojourn in India. The conqueror had no time to teach and the conquered were in no mood to learn. The fate of his venture depended on the longevity of Macedonian authority in India. In the circumstances any lasting effects of the invasion on this country would be out of the question. As a matter of fact there is no trace of Greek influence on Indian institutions as described by Kautilya or Megasthenes. Even the military lessons of Alexander's success were not learnt, and the Mauryan army was organised on indigenous lines. It is argued that Alexander's invasion indirectly influenced India in so far as his Hellenisation of Western Asia was permanent, and that any subsequent influence on India from that quarter might be regarded as ultimately due to Alexander. True, but not to his invasion of India, even if he had not conquered North Western India, such later influences were

explorations increased the existing facilities for trade between India and Western Asia

**Alexander's Place in Indian History** Alexander's Indian expedition is alluded to by no indigenous author. The only existing evidence of it on our side is the claim of a few chiefs of North Western India to be descended from Alexander. Still it is unsafe to interpret this silence of our sources as indicative of his negligible role in Indian History. The tendency of some scholars is to look sneeringly at the Indian career of Alexander as if a giant turned pigmy at the magic touch of India, and to regard him as a semi barbarian bent on cutting throats irrespective of caste distinctions and in defiance of benefit of clergy. No doubt Alexander encountered difficulties in India which he had not experienced before. He stole a victory contrary to his boasted principle. He did not come into conflict with the most powerful army in India—the Magadhan army. Therefore it is groundless to say that he proved the intrinsic inferiority of the greatest Indian armies, though it is idle to speculate that the Nanda army would have been more than a match for his army if there had been a collision between the two. He did not permanently affect Indian life or thought, and his expedition contrary to his expectations ultimately turned out to be a barren and ephemeral triumph. But his generalship and heroism did not suffer eclipse on Indian soil, and he returned not crest fallen but as an undefeated general having exhibited not only his barbarity, but also his generosity, goodness and greatness. He had even interested himself in Indian gymnosophists or anchorites and philosophers. It is therefore singularly unhappy to compare him with Timur, Nadir Shah and other scourges of mankind.

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## SECTION VIII RELIGION

**Buddhism and Jainism** During the century and a half following the *Parinibbana* of the Buddha the history of his religion is more internal than external. The attempt to fix his teaching which was to guide his followers in the absence of a recognised successor interdicted by him on the eve of his decease gave rise to difficulties and divisions. The first

ecclesiastical council was held at Rajagriha immediately after his demise about 487 B C and another at Vaisali one hundred years later i.e. about 387 B C and the Buddhist canon developed. M. Przyluski interprets the councils as marking the shifting centre of gravity of Buddhism and the second council as symptomatic of its migration in the direction of Mathura. With the growth of the Sangha the institutions of confession and retreat came into existence. The latter confined monks and nuns to a locality for three months in the rainy season and limited the period of their wandering life. After Bimbisara the fortunes of Buddhism would not have been promoted during the eighty years of paricide Lings. The Nandas seem to have had leanings towards Jainism rather than Buddhism, which was confined to the *Madhyadesa*. Its condition was thus stationary during the Saisunaga Nanda epoch. Lack of sufficient royal patronage and differences within the church seem to have caused stagnation though the growth of religious literature and ecclesiastical activity must have consolidated the position of Buddhism. Jainism advanced slowly but steadily in spite of the activities of the Ajivikas or followers of Gosala, the opponent of Mahavira. Ajatasatru and Udayin were its warm supporters. From the greater hostility of the Buddhists than that of the Jains towards the Nandas and from the Hathigumpha inscription, it is clear that Jainism got the better of Buddhism as regards royal patronage.

**Vaishnavism and Saivism** The grand religious inquest of the Buddha and Mahavira created a stir in the dovecotes of orthodoxy and promoted other religious movements. Their appeal to the *ahimsa* instinct of man was wider than the circle of their followers. The opposition of their personalities to the impersonal *Rishis* of the Brahmanical system had contributed to their success. The *bhakti* (devotion to a personal god) movement founded on *ahimsa* and adoration of a personal deity set its face against animal sacrifices and ritualism. Vaishnavism and Saivism originated during this period. Krishna worship developed at Mathura and its neighbourhood. Panini refers to Vasudevalas or worshippers of Vasudeva or Vishnu. The transformation of the terrific Rudra into the

benevolent Siva was completed. Thus a new theism based on old ideas confronted the heterodox novelty of Buddhism and Jainism. Further the old religion was consolidated, and the *Sutras*—*Srauta*, *Grihya* and *Dharma*—based on the Vedic lore were composed. The earlier *Sutrakarins* (authors of the *Sutras*) like Gautama (different from the Buddha), Bo(au)dhayan and Apastamba belong to this age. On the whole the tendency of their works is illiberal and puritanical, contrasting sharply with the practices of the Vedic epoch, their key note is restraint rather than freedom. Here we have the beginnings of the rigid Brahmanical religious and social system.

## SECTION IX ECONOMIC CONDITION

**A Progressive Economic Structure** Mrs. Rhys Davids reconstructs the economic picture of the age mainly with reference to the Buddhist *Jatakas* in order to disprove the facile assumption of Western economists that the ancient Orient, more ethical than economic, emphasised agriculture at the expense of industry and commerce, and sacrificed economic progress at the altar of caste, and that China alone was familiar with the instruments of credit from the seventh century A.D. The allusions to economic conditions in the *Jatakas* are incidental and valuable, whatever may be the character of the stories. The foundation of the economic structure was the village of small peasant proprietors who owned the soil, subject to the payment of taxes levied by the government in kingdoms as well as republics. There were only a few cities like Rajagriha, Benares, Sravasti, Saketa, Kausambi and Champa, but the distinction between *grama* (village) and *nigama* (small town) was not sharp as a village might be inhabited by thirty to a thousand families.

**Agriculture** Agriculture was the normal occupation which was regarded as natural and healthy, though its pursuit neither increased nor diminished a man's social standing. But to abandon cultivation in order to take up service under impoverished princes was reprobated. There was a well-developed sense of citizenship among the villagers, who exhibited strong tendencies towards corporate activity under the leadership of their headman. The labourers working for wages were regarded as inferior to slaves. A number of gruns

were grown including rice and also sugarcane vegetables fruits and flowers. Drought or floods caused famine which was sometimes widespread. The Brahmins and the Kshatriyas were frequently engaged in agriculture though this calling was reserved for the Vaisyas and in all sorts of occupations including even snake charming.

**Industry** The principle of specialisation and of division of labour was well understood and corporate activity was much conspicuous. There was localisation of industry and industrial life was controlled by *strenis* or guilds of which there were as many as eighteen wood workers smiths, leather dressers painters etc. Each guild was presided over by a chief, and such industrial magnates were in close touch with the government, exercising much influence on it. Quarrels among the guilds, as at Benares might result in the establishment of a common control over them. The other important industries were ivory working, weaving jewellery, pottery and garland making. Even robbers understood the value of organisation and corporate activity. The Setthi seems to have been a merchant prince Anathapindika the lay patron and friend of the Buddha was a great Setthi. Though it was customary for the son to adopt his father's profession there was sufficient freedom of initiative and mobility of labour.

**Commerce and Currency** Temporary and permanent partnerships were common, and distant sea borne trade was active. Internal trade was equally flourishing, and many trade routes were in good and safe condition. The importance of retail trade was understood and the qualities of a successful shop-keeper known. Though barter survived to some extent, coins were the ordinary means of exchange. Credit instruments were also in use, and prices were competitive and customary. Money lending was regarded as an honest profession. In short we find agriculture diligently and amicably carried on by practically the whole people as a toilsome but most natural and necessary pursuit, crafts and commerce flourishing highly organised corporately and locally, under conditions of individual and corporate competition, the leading men thereof the friends and counsellors of kings labour largely hereditary yet therewithal a mobility and initiative anything but rigid.

revealed in the exercise of it, (and) a thorough familiarity with money and credit \*

## SECTION X SOCIAL LIFE

**Caste** The threat to Brahmanism offered by Buddhism and Jainism must have been responsible for the growing rigidity of caste. The early *Sutras* stereotype the four castes with their distinctions sharply outlined and with appropriate professions, emphasising the superiority of the Brahmans. The Vaisyas tended to be similar to the Sudras, who were free from the restrictions prescribed for the higher castes. Though the food prepared by the latter was not regarded as impure, disabilities of various kinds attached to their lives made their social status irksome and humiliating. The growth of Aryan contact with older Indian tribes had contributed to the formation practically of a fifth caste of Chandalas and other untouchables whose position was now defined. Many dishes and liquour were denied to the Brahmans, but not animal food, still the tendency towards vegetarianism was pronounced among them. Further, the four *asramas* (stages of life) and the duties proper to them engaged much attention. In short the *Sutras* bound particularly the Brahmans with ceremonies of all kinds from birth to death.

**Women** Child marriage was encouraged with emphasis on the glory of *kanyadana* (gift of a girl). While *anuloma* marriages were tolerated, *pratiloma* connections (between high caste females and low caste males were regarded with horror and the Chandala was defined as the issue of a *Brahmani* (Brahman woman) and a Sudra. Marriage became the profession of the fair sex whose religious functions became formal. Their education suffered because they were treated as unfit for Vedic study, their marriage was regarded as their *upanayana*, and they had long ago lost their right to the latter. The theory of their eternal subordination to the other sex was stated in language, naked and unabashed, though occasionally there was exaltation of woman in general. The mother received increasing reverence with the glorification of motherhood. Remarriage of widows was condemned in unmeasured terms, but *nyoga* remained. On the whole



women were protected from the tyranny of their husbands. There was some improvement in their financial position and the conception of *stridhana* (woman's property) developed. Still the chapter of woman's degradation was opened.

## SECTION XI CULTURE

**Literature** We have already noted the compilation of the earlier *Sutras* and the growth of the Buddhist Canon. The Jain Canon was in the process of formation. Panini may be assigned to this period though some scholars would place him in the sixth century B.C. He was born at Salatura, near Attock, and the existence of his image was reported to Hsien Tsang in the seventh century A.D. His *Sabdanusasana* (science of words) or

Panini and Katyayana	<i>Ashtadhyayi</i> ('eight-chapters') consists of nearly 4000 <i>Sutras</i> . The manner of its arrangement is difficult to explain. The order of these <i>Sutras</i> was modified later to suit beginners in grammatical study. Panini mentions ten <i>puracharyas</i> (pre-lecessors), but his work has eclipsed their fame. Though he has been corrected and supplemented by Katyayana, a South Indian, and Patanjali, his glory remains undiminished. The chief characteristic of his work is its astonishing brevity and its attempt to derive all substantives from verbs. "Grammar is by the Indians regarded as the first and most important of the sciences because it is the foundation of all of them. The greatest achievement of Indian science, it has rendered eminent services to Western philology. The Sanskrit grammarians were the first to analyse word forms, to recognise the difference between root and suffix, to determine the functions of suffixes, and on the whole to elaborate a grammatical system so accurate and complete as to be unparalleled in any other country. Katyayana, the next great grammarian, lived about 350 B.C."
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**Philosophy** The earliest of the six systems of Indian philosophy, Sankhya and Yoga, were pre-Buddhist. Though the two *darsanas* originated in different circumstances, unconnected and connected with religion—one connected with the explanation of the world and the other with a-ceticism—and though the two were atheistic and theistic respectively, they

became philosophically one. It is even said that God is not an essential part of the Yoga system. The Sāṅkhya turns away from the *Vedas* and traces the origin of the world to *prakṛiti* or original matter, but recognises a number of independent souls. These two modes of thought profoundly influenced Buddhism and Jainism. The opposition to the

Vedic lore exhibited by the latter was led by the **Materialism** materialists whose Acharya, Charvaka, probably lived early in this period. The *Vinayapitaka* prohibits the study of Lokayata (rationalism). It is said that Brihaspati, preceptor of the gods, wrote a *Sutra* to confound the materialists and atheists. The Charvakas preached thorough going rationalism and regarded the soul as mere intelligence. They stigmatised the Vedic *Rishis* as humbugs and the Vedic ritual as their means of livelihood. They asked the performers of sacrifice to sacrifice their fathers so that they might obtain salvation, rather than innocent animals. Their true position is difficult to make out, and it is hard to believe that they wrote much to prove the value of sensual pleasure. Their writings have been mostly destroyed by orthodoxy and perverted to suit its own purpose. Kautilya gives the name *anvikshaki* or philosophy to Sāṅkhya, Yoga and Lokayata, and allows it the place of honour in his enumeration of the sciences, the *Vedas* occupying the second place.

**Artha—and Kama—Sastras** Some of the innumerable predecessors of Kautilya and Vatsyayana must have lived in this period. Dirgha Charayana, alluded to by both, is probably identical with the minister of Prasenajit of Kosala.

**Education** Takshasila or Taxila earned a great name as the centre of advanced studies, religious and secular, especially medicine. Jivaka lived in the time of Bimbisara, and at the completion of his seven-year course in medicine he was asked, according to the story, to pick out the non medicinal plants around Taxila, and the examiner accepted the answer that there were none. Panini and Kautilya probably flourished in that academic atmosphere. The University of Taxila shines in the pages of the *Jatakas*, which in one place mention five hundred pupils studying *silpa* (art). The number of subjects taught there must have increased since the period of the *Chandogya Upanishad*.

**Art** The only available specimens of the art of the period are the unique remains at Old Rajagriha the capital of Magadha till Bimbisara abandoned it and the statues already mentioned whose identification and ascription to this period are not beyond doubt. The punch marked coins which are of indigenous origin are primitive in type.

## SECTION XII SOUTH INDIA

The Aryanisation of South India must have been completed during this period. The relations of the Nandas with Ialanga and the possible extension of their power to the Godavari even to Mysore, are the only available peeps into South Indian History. The trade between Northern and Southern India must be viewed in the light of the supreme importance attached to it in the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya. The sea borne trade of South India with Western Asia and Egypt proved by the *Babylon* (*Babylon*) *Jataka*, must have continued. The Andhras became an independent power, and the Tamil kingdoms must have been long in existence. Though Panini does not mention South India, Katyayana shows his familiarity with the terms Chola and Pandya.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE MAURYA EMPIRE (c 325—c 188 B.C.)

#### SECTION I CHANDRAGUPTA (c 325—c 301 B.C.)

**Sources** The Brahmanical and Buddhist traditions embodied in the *Puranas* and *Mahabharata* supply scraps of information regarding the overthrow of the Nandas by Chandragupta and Kautilya and the reign period of the first Maurya—twenty four years. The Jain tradition is chiefly valuable for its account of Chandragupta's abdication and conversion to Jainism. Most of the Greek authors help us here and there. But the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya and the *Indica* of Megasthenes are the historians' mainstay though the *Mudra rakshasa* of Visakhadatta deserves greater attention than has been bestowed upon it. Our information despite its richness and variety, bears more on the system of administration and social life than on political history and chronology.

**The "Arthashastra" of Kautilya** The *Arthashastra* is defined by its author as that science which treats of the

means of acquiring and maintaining the earth," it is therefore distinct from the other sciences dealing with *dharma*, *kama* and *molsha*. It is also called *Dandaniti*, the science of sceptre or government (the word *danda* has other meanings like *rule* and punishment), and distinguished from *Varta* or Economics. The treatise of Kautilya is based on many previous works on the subject, and frequently the opinions of *puriacharyas* are quoted and discussed and accepted or rejected; it is in the form of a *Sutra* and *Bhashya* (text and commentary), both done by the author who is also called Vishnugupta in the work itself. He has other names like Vatsyayana, Dramadacharya and Chanakya, recorded in later lexicons like the *Triksandha* (a supplement to the *Amarakosa* of Amarasimha), and so a few scholars regard him as identical with Vatsyayana, the author of the *Kama Sutra* and with another Vatsyayana who wrote the *Nyaya Bhashya*, and as a South Indian. The form Kautilya is retained here as the alternative Kautilya is not sufficiently supported by manuscript authority.

**Its Contents** The *Arthashastra* consists of fifteen books and a hundred and fifty chapters, but we may divide it into three parts, the first dealing with the king, his council and the departments of government, the second with civil and criminal law, and the third with inter state law, diplomacy and war. It is therefore a comprehensive work giving practical advice not only on governmental organisation but also on subjects like the best means of ruining the enemy, though politics is treated in it as a normative science. It is neither a Gazetteer nor a *darsana* (political philosophy), the word *darsana* is used in the work in the sense of the author's settled views or convictions. It gives a blend of theory and practice which appeared soundest to the arch monarchist and imperial statesman in the evening of his life. Its range is encyclopaedic, and some have doubted whether one small head could contain so much knowledge and wisdom. It is the one work in Sanskrit Literature which has removed the old misconception that in ancient India everything was moved by otherworldly considerations.

**Its Date** The attempt to determine the age of Kautilya with reference to that of Vatsyayana, the *Kamasutrikara*, or

moral Enigmas (*vide* Bana's indignation against Kautilya) like the Epicurean and Charvaka traditions we cannot regard Kautilya as one who scrupulously conformed to the dictates of the *Dharmasastras* or endorse the view that 'even the sage Buddha would not but have given similar advice had he written an *Arthashastra*'

**The Mudrarakshasa of Visakhadatta** Devoted exclusively to politics, the *Mudrarakshasa* is a drama in which there is no love element. In many respects it is in conformity with the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya. It shows that the Maurya revolution which dragged on for nearly a year was effected by Chandragupta and Kautilya with foreign help. It emphasises the insecurity of Chandragupta's life after the overthrow of the Nandas and the fidelity and machinations of the loyalists. It reveals a political morality akin to that of the *Arthashastra*. The story of Malayaketu is reminiscent of the invasion of India by Seleukos Nikator and of his withdrawal. Chandragupta is described as a young man and a *Nandavamsiya* (belonging to the Nanda family) though belonging to a *gotrantara* (different gotra). He is addressed as *Vrishala* (Sudra) by Kautilya, and this allusion to the former's social status is confirmed by the *Puranas*. The reference to him as a *kulahina* (of ignoble birth) is made by Rakshasa (a character in the drama) who contrasts Chandragupta with his own masters the Nandas, who are treated as *kulinas* (well born). Here we have a dramatic perversion of history. Similarly Rakshasa's characterisation of Chandragupta's government as ministerial rather than monarchical is merely to show the latter's weakness. A number of *adhyakshas* or Superintendents of Departments are mentioned except the Superintendent of Chariots, this exception gives a clue to the assignment of the drama to the period when chariots fell into disuse—certainly before the seventh century A.D. The *Bharatavalya* (the concluding benedictory stanza) would suggest the age of a Vaishnava emperor or eminence for example Chandragupta II Vikramaditya. Hence the work may be assigned to the fifth century A.D. Though the tradition embodied in the *Mudrarakshasa* is a late dramatic tradition, it seems to

be founded on genuine contemporary accounts. The drama the best historical play in Sanskrit Literature throws light on the main outlines of the Maurya revolution and on the activities of Chandragupta and Kautilya. It describes the imperial position of the Nandas and the strength of the loyalist reaction after their extermination. In short the *Mudraraks'hasa* deserves criticism rather than condemnation.\*

**The Indika of Megasthenes** The *Indika* of Megasthenes is extant only in fragments quoted by other authors. His mention of impossibilities like one legged men men whose ears touched their feet mouthless and noseless men and mothers seven years old in the Pandya country, is responsible for Strabo's charge of mendacity against him but all this shows merely his credulity and the character of his Indian informants. A few modern scholars have accused him of an idealising tendency and a proneness to attribute to India the institutions of other countries. This criticism is founded upon his general statement that there were no slaves famine or wars in India and that theft was rare and upon his seven exclusive divisions of Hindu society philosophers agriculturists shepherds artisans soldiers spies and minister. Whatever might be his deficiencies as a critical observer and his linguistic imperfections for accurate reporting his rank as ambassador and his sojourn at Pataliputra for a few years enabled him to record many valuable observations. There is no denying the accuracy of his topographical account of the Mauryan metropolis and of his description of the administrative system imperial and municipal. His picture of contemporary social life affords some corroborative evidence. He provokes laughter chiefly when he records without critical misgiving what he has not seen or learnt from his trustworthy Indian contemporaries. He describes Pataliputra as the greatest city in India at the junction of two rivers a parallelogram 80 stadia by 15 ( $9\frac{1}{2}$  miles by  $1\frac{1}{2}$ ) protected by a wooden wall and a ditch. Armed women guarded the king and accompanied him in hunting and his bedroom was changed frequently in

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\* R. Sathyanathier *Historical Notes on the Mudraraks'hasa*—*Journal of Oriental Research* xii pp 147-53

order to defeat plots against his life Pataliputra was governed by a commission of thirty members divided into six committees of five members each. There were great officers of state to superintend irrigation channels, roads, rivers, land, tax-collection, etc. The army was well organised and properly equipped for war at the public expense, and governed by a body of thirty members divided into six sections in charge of the four branches of the army, the navy and the commissariat. The criminal law was very severe. The *Indica* and the *Arthashastra* supplement each other and constitute the leading authorities for the history of Chandragupta. The disharmony, to some extent of the data of these works relates to circumstantial, not to fundamentals\*.

**Career of Chandragupta** We have already indicated the parentage of Chandragupta and the Brahmanical account of his origin need not be rejected in order to support the Buddhist statement that he was a Kshatriya. As a young man he is said to have met Alexander in the Panjab, sought his help against the reigning Nanda who had somehow goaded him into intransigence, and fled from the Macedonian camp when he was threatened with death for his audacious behaviour. He proceeded to Pataliputra with the Brahman Kautilya of Taxila overthrew the greedy, unpopular and heretical Nanda and established his own power. The Maurya revolution was Brahmanical and popular, protracted and bloody. It was eminently successful in so far as a greater empire than that of the Nandas was erected. The next step taken by Chandragupta was the annihilation of the Macedonian garrisons and the emancipation of the Indus Valley from foreign yoke. The withdrawal of Eudemos the successor of Philippos, about 317 B.C. marks the complete extinction of Macedonian authority in India. We are unaware of the exact date of Chandragupta's annexation of Gujarat and Kathiawar which is patent from the Gumar inscription of Rudradaman I ascribing the origin of Lake Sarsana to the Vaisya Pushyagupta the provincial governor of Chandragupta. the Jain date of the Maurya

Emperor's accession 312 B C, may be regarded as the date in question. About 305 B C Seleukos Nikator aimed at re-establishing the Greek Satrapy of India and crossed the Indus but found that Chandragupta had got ready. It is not certain that a battle was fought undoubtedly Seleukos found his position untenable. We know only the terms of the treaty subsequently concluded which were entirely favourable to the Indian Emperor who parted with 500 elephants and obtained in return the four satrapies of Aria, Arachosia, Gedrosia and the Paropanisadae. But the cession of the last satrapy is questioned by Dr. Tarn who thinks that the ceded territory was "predominantly Indian in blood" and much less extensive than is supposed by Dr. Smith. As regards the matrimonial alliance between Seleukos and Chandragupta Dr. Tarn practically accepts the story of the latter or Bindusara marrying a Seleucid princess and regards Bindusara or Asoka as a Seleucid on the distaff side according to the same author this relationship would best explain the friendly intercourse between the Mauryan and Syrian Empires†. There is no doubt that after the treaty Seleukos sent his representative Megasthenes to Pataliputra.

After his grand triumph over Seleukos we come to the last days of Chandragupta. Jain tradition connects the exodus of Bhadrabahu with 12 000 followers and his settlement at Sravasti Belgola (Mysore), with a severe famine in Northern India lasting for twelve years. The available archaeological evidence in support of the story is far from being contemporary, not earlier than the seventh century A D. It is said that Chandragupta abdicated and accompanied Bhadrabahu as his humble disciple. Soon after the Jain settlement in South India the pontiff died, and Chandragupta followed him to the other world twelve years later. The repetition of the number twelve throws some suspicion on the story. The Jain tradition under consideration is however generally accepted as in

\* Tarn, *op cit* p 100

† *Ibid* p 151



the main historical At his abdication or death, Chandragupta was probably about forty five years of age

**Extent of the Maurya Empire** The Nanda dominions, which did not include Kalinga on the eve of the Maurya revolution but covered the Gangetic Valley, passed over to Chandragupta, who acquired the Punjab and Sindh by destroying the Macedonian garrisons and extended his authority from Malwa to the Arabian Sea His treaty with Seleukos added a few trans Indus provinces including Gandhara to his empire, but it is uncertain whether it touched the Hindu Kush and gave him a "scientific" North Western frontier The extension of his power to South India is improbable, and the vague references of Justin, Plutarch and the author of *Mahavamsa* need not be interpreted strictly The Jain story of Chandragupta's domicile in the South does not imply his retirement to a corner of his empire It is better to confine the political authority of the first Maurya to Northern India excluding Assam but including portions of Afghanistan and Baluchistan and corresponding broadly to the *chakravarti* *kshetra* of the *Arthashastra*

**Administration** The growth of imperialism and monarchical power from the days of Bimbisara and Ajatasatru was prejudicial to the republican institutions which graced the age of the Buddha On the eve of the Macedonian invasion such institutions flourished mostly in the Indus

Valley and Rajputana and Poros was steadily digging their grave Alexander encouraged the policy of Poros by adding to his territorial possessions, and his striking success revealed to thinking minds the weakness characteristic of small non-monarchical states—internal dissension and inefficiency of external defence Kautilya and Chandragupta were no lovers of the republican ideal, and their persistent effort was directed to crushing everything that crossed the path of imperialism and consolidation They were largely but not completely successful in their crusade against the non monarchical political system

Though Kautilya was an uncompromising monarchist, he did not stand for royal absolutism. He knew that the chariot

upon himself a corresponding share of the national sin. Educated in these precepts among a moralising people, he would have been more than human had he escaped the obsession of this conception of his duties ' \*

**Imperial Government** A do-nothing king was foreign to ancient Indian ideas. The theory of royal activity went to the root of the polity. The king's time-table is perhaps too heavy, and Dr Fleet thinks it most natural and least surprising that many kings abdicated to shake off their public burdens. The Prime Minister, the Purohita, the King  
 Council and  
 Bureaucracy  
 Senapati and the Yuvaraja belonged to the inner circle of ministers. Besides these there were other great officers in charge of finance, public works, and royal correspondence, and a large number of superintendents presiding over the departments of commerce, weights and measures, tolls, weaving, agriculture, excise, slaughter house, prostitution, passports, urban administration, etc. The government undertook constituent and ministrant functions and even some socialistic activities. Besides the regulation of commerce, trade and industry, it controlled the state monopolies and manufactures and poor relief for orphans, widows and disabled government servants, civil and military. The performance of such functions by the state necessitated an army of officials, a well organised civil service.

**Finance** Public income was mainly derived from cultivated land (normally the state's demand being 1/6th of the produce), pastures, forests, mines, etc, besides the extra income from irrigated land. Further there were receipts from customs and excise, and license fees from workmen, artisans and traders and for gambling and passports. The miscellaneous items included fines from law courts and special taxes and *pranaya* or "benevolences". The main items of expenditure related to the king and his household, government servants, army, public works, poor relief, religion, etc. The Collector General was in charge of the collection of revenue.

of the state could not move on a single wheel and recognised the necessity for ministerial assistance to royalty. His injunction that the king should listen to the opinions of his ministers

is interpreted by some as lending support to the conception of a limited monarchy. The enumeration of governmental forms—royal ministerial and royal ministerial—occurs in connection with

a *sushlakalaha* or feigned misunderstanding between Kautilya and Chandragupta in the *Mudrarakshasa*, and the former's preference for the second form need not be regarded as, and is not, the real view of the Arthasastrakara, who was indubitably an arch monarchist. Still he makes concessions to the aristocratic and democratic principles of government. While stretching the king's activity to its extreme limit and emphasising the value of his personal conduct of public business, Kautilya endorses the wisdom of collective deliberation and lays down that 'as a student his teacher, a son his father, and a servant his master, the king shall follow him' (*purohita* or chief priest). Another dictum underlined by him is as follows: "In the happiness of his subjects lies his (the king's) happiness, in their welfare his welfare whatever pleases himself he shall not consider as good, but whatever pleases his subjects he shall consider as good. In short his conception is that of a learned and morally disciplined monarch, advised by well-qualified ministers and bent on his subjects' welfare. He subscribes to the Social Contract theory and regards the king as a public servant though of the highest order, and his salary as wages for the performance of his duties. He further obliges him to follow the injunctions of the *Sastras*. Moreover, local autonomy, political and economic, must to some extent have reduced the king's power. Examples in the *Jatakas* and other early works of royalty weeping over its impotence or its limited power could only be regarded as exceptional. Still there is no denying the fact that the monarch was no autocrat. Checks on his authority, more moral than constitutional are prescribed but their practical operation, though probable cannot be asserted. Dr F W Thomas observes 'It is as guardian of the social (including domestic and religious) order and defence against anarchical oppression that the king is entitled to his revenue, failing to perform this duty, he takes

upon himself a corresponding share of the national sin. Educated in these precepts among a moralising people, he would have been more than human had he escaped the obsession of this conception of his duties \*\*

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and the Treasurer General, whose office was efficiently organised in charge of payments. There was an excellent system of accounting and auditing. The charge of over taxation cannot be easily advanced as we do not know the burden on the individual of the tax system as a whole. Since the material prosperity of the empire was great, the ability of its subjects to pay must have been equally substantial.

**Census** Though the taking of census commenced in ancient Rome in the reign of Servius Tullius (6th century B.C.) and imperial census on modern lines was first attempted by Julius Caesar in the first century B.C. The Mauryan census of the fourth century B.C. reminds us of the later Roman system. The objects of the former were political and economic to control the movements of population, indigenous and foreign, and to ensure the stability and health of the state, to gauge accurately the military resources of the empire, and to form an estimate of its material prosperity so as to secure an *equitable basis for taxation*. The village officials were to number the people, according to their caste and occupation, the slaves and freemen, the young and old, men and women, and record their character, income and expenditure. They were also to count the animals in each house. The census of towns was taken on the same lines by municipal officers who had also to *register the movements of foreigners and non residents* by obtaining information about them from charitable institutions and from heads of households entertaining them. The data thus collected were checked and controlled by superior officers and collated with those supplied independently by *charas* or spies. The census was a permanent institution, a state department run by permanent officials under the Collector General, not a decennial or periodical affair as it is now in our country.

**Army and Navy** The four *angas* ('limbs' or branches) of the army were elephants, horses, foot soldiers and chariots. The naval and transport and supply departments made the divisions six. Megasthenes mentions six Boards of five members each to control the military administration. The various branches were well organised and paid by the government. The technique of warfare was scientific and efficient. Muc

attention was given to the construction and maintenance of forts, and the arts of mining and counter mining were well understood\* "In short the Indians possessed the art of war".\* The navy was not conspicuous except in transport. The ethical side of the military code as evidenced in practice produced a good impression on the Greeks, on the battle-field the wounded and disarmed were decently treated and those who had given up their arms were saved from butchery, the civil population and the agriculturists were not molested. But in diplomacy, aggression and Machiavellism were triumphant. All the resources of the intellect were employed to compass the ruin of the neighbour, the proverbial enemy, and *kutayuddha* (treacherous war) was practised. No doubt such practices were allowed only in emergencies, but expediency should not be confounded with morality.

**Criminal Law.** The punishments awarded were fines, whipping, mutilation and death. Torture was employed. The capital crimes were man slaughter, maiming an artisan, destroying a dam, theft of 40 *panas* (about Rs 30) and more, etc. The criminal law was very severe. There were many opportunities for blackmailing the well-to-do in connection with political offences. But it must be remembered that man's inhumanity to man is the most disgraceful chapter in human history, and in the domain of criminal law progress among the nations of the world has been amazingly slow. The criminal law of England in the first half of the last century was so barbarous that the theft of five shillings was a capital offence. Even after Peel's reforms, cattle or letter stealing was punished with death. In 1833 a boy nine years old was sentenced to death for stealing some painter's colours worth two pence through a broken window, but the sentence was not carried out thanks to executive intervention †

**Provincial and Local Government** The empire of Chandragupta seems to have been divided into four provinces: the home province, consisting of the *Prachya* and *Madhya desa* regions, controlled directly from Pataliputra by the emperor, the North Western or Taxila, the Western or Malwa

\* C H I I p 490

† Sir Spencer Walpole *History of England from 1815* II p 132

with its head quarters at Ujjain, and Gujarat and Kathiawar governed by Pushyagupta from Gurnar. The provincial governors were as far as possible members of the royal family. Light is thrown by Megasthenes, on the municipal administration of Pataliputra and the urban government described by Kautilya must have been common to the cities of the empire. Much is made of the latter's failure to mention the Board system of administration so well noted by the Greek ambassador. What appeared worthy of record to the foreigner might have been omitted by the indigenous author as quite ordinary. The principle of majority decision and the *panchayat* system were known to Kautilya. After all the system elaborated by Megasthenes is the *panchayat* organisation, and the application of its democratic principle to military administration is a little surprising. At any rate this discrepancy between Kautilya and Megasthenes is no ground for assigning them to different ages. The six municipal committees of Pataliputra looked after (a) Industries (b) Foreigners, (c) Census, (d) Trade, (e) Manufactures and the sale (f) and collection of the sales tax. The attention given to foreigners, living and dead, is noteworthy, and constitutes decisive proof of the commercial intercourse of India with Western Asia and beyond. The Mayor or Prefect of the town was called *Nagaraka*, and subordinate officers helped him in his executive work. Village administration was in the hands of the *Gramani* or headman advised by the *panchayat*, and his official superiors were the *Gopa* in charge of five to ten villages and the *Sthanika* with a more extensive jurisdiction. Above these were the District Officers and Governors (*Pradesikas* and *Rajukas*), probably graded as *Mahamatras*.

**Merits and Defects of the Administration.** Organisation was conspicuous throughout. There is no doubt that political differentiation marched abreast of political integration. The separation of the civil and military departments is remarkable, seeing that Akbar in the sixteenth century A.D. had a combined civil and military service manned by *mansabdars*. The standing army of the Mauryas maintained by the state was markedly different from the feudal forces of that grand Mughal. The latter's army was not however wanting in organisation, but its central defect was inefficiency.

organisation is not synonymous with efficiency. The Mauryan government was so efficient that it created and maintained an extensive empire and made it respected by Seleukos. The effectiveness of the civil administration may be inferred from the general progress of the age. Peace and order was established so securely that the distant parts of the empire were controlled from Pataliputra. Some of the features of the Mauryan organisation like the separation of civil and military services, the census, the departments of the central government, the extensive government functions, and the municipal councils indicate the great advance made in the fourth century B.C. But the seamy side of the administrative system cannot be overlooked. Apart from the severity of the criminal law, the restrictions on individual freedom were numerous. Besides the passport system, the tyranny of spies and *agents provocateurs* must have made many citizens' lives wretched. Above all, the atmosphere must have been vitiated by the Kautilyan maxim of success at any cost, and the moral tone of the administration could not have been high. Still it is unfair to exaggerate such probabilities. Lastly, the ideal of maximum royal activity does not harmonise with the system of hereditary monarchy, which in such circumstances could only produce giants or pigmies.

## \* SECTION II BINDUSARA (c. 301—c. 273 B.C.)

**Conquest of South India** The inclusion in Asoka's empire of a substantial part of cis-Vindhyan India raises the question of its conquest. There is no definite ascription of such a conquest to Chandragupta, and although our knowledge of the events of Asoka's early regnal years is imperfect, we may regard Kalinga as the only region conquered by him. To Bindusara is ascribed by Taranatha, the Tibetan historian of Buddhism, the destruction, with the help of Kautilya, of the Lings and ministers of about sixteen towns as well as the annexation of the territory between the Eastern and Western oceans. The association of Kautilya with King Bindusara is supported by Hemachandra. The Buddhist author of the *Arya Vajrasūtra-Mulakalpa* says that Chanakya, "the bad Brahman," served during three reigns including that of Bindusara, who ascended the throne as a minor and became



bold eloquent and sweet tongued \* The details extracted here are valuable The minority of Bindusara might explain the discrepancy regarding his reign period in the *Puranas* (25 years) and Buddhist accounts (28 years) and negative the possibility of Bindusara's conquest of the South as Crown Prince His boldness justifies the epithet with which he is honoured by the Greeks—*Amitrakhata* or *Amitrakhada* (slayer or consumer of his enemies) The destruction of sixteen kingdoms mentioned by Taranatha could not be thought of in Northern India The assumption that the Tibetan historian might be referring to a general revolt in Northern India is gratuitous though there might have been trouble at Taxila due to ministerial arrogance There are four references in the Tamil Literature of the Sangam age including two by Mamulanai to the invasion of South India by the Maurvas of the North (though a few scholars would call this in question) and to the advance of the Mauryan army as far as Vadura and Podiyil hill (south west of Madura) Further Mamulanar mentions the loss of the Nanda treasures in the floods of the Ganges One of the four references mentioned above is to the *vambamoriyar* or upstart Maurvas Some would assign the invasion to the reign of Chandragupta But the *Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela* referring to his eleventh regnal year mentions a league of Dravida states which had been in existence for 113 years and was a source of danger to him Therefore this dangerous league must have originated in 176 (probable date of Kharavela's accession)—11 (his eleventh regnal year) + 113 = 278 B.C. and this date falls within the reign of Bindusara This means that the Mauryan invasion of South India was probably an ultimate failure as far as the Tamil states were concerned which consequently formed no part of Asoka's empire The probable partial unsuccess of Bindusara in the South was perhaps responsible for the fact that he did not attempt the conquest of Kalinga so that Asoka could truly describe it as an unconquered country It is now sufficiently clear that Bindusara pursued a warlike career and succeeded in annexing a part of South India though not the Tamil land

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\* K. P. Jayaswal *An Imperial History of India* (1934) p. 16

**Relations with Western Powers** Bindusara maintained intact the harmonious relations commercial and diplomatic established by his father with the Western princes and even went a little further in this direction Demachos succeeded Megasthenes as Syrian ambassador Seleukos Nikator was assassinated in 280 B C and Bindusara requested his successor Antiochos I to supply him with sweet wine, dried figs and 2 Sophist and obtained the first two things and a reply stating that it was an offence against Greek law to sell a Professor Pto'emy II of Egypt sent Dionysios as his representative to Pataliputra Our knowledge of Bindusara's long reign is very defective and we have put together the scraps of available information direct and inferential

### SECTION III ASOKA (c 273—c 232 B C)

**Chronology** The best way of determining the initial date of Asoka's reign is to subtract the reign periods of Chandragupta and Bindusara from the date of accession of Chandragupta on the basis of his synchronism with Alexander the Great The real difficulty is in getting at the starting point Dr Smith's old dating in 322 B C is due to the assumption that Chandragupta could not have moved his little finger unless and until Alexander was dead and buried and that the Maurya revolution would have followed the attack on the Macedonian garrisons in the Panjab and the assassination of Philippos in January or February 324 B C The belief that at any rate the overthrow of the Nandas could not have occurred before Alexander had left India in October, 325 B C is not well founded It is extremely probable that, after his failure in 326 B C to secure the help of the foreigners against the Nandas Chandragupta did not vegetate in the Panjab but hastened with Kautilya to his objective Pataliputra The *Mudrarakshasa* tradition suggests that his real woes commenced after his overthrow of the last Nanda and continued for nearly a year Therefore it is safe to date the Maurya revolution in 325 B C so that the assassination of Philippos in the following year may be construed as the first attempt of Chandragupta to abolish Macedonian authority, which ended finally about 317 B C Without assigning reasons Dr Smith accepts 326 B C for Chandragupta's accession and 301

B C for his abdication or death \* The Jain date 312 B C may be regarded as that of Chandragupta's acquisition of Kashiwar. That he reigned for twenty four years is stated in the *Puranas* and the *Mahavamsa* but as regards Bindusara's reign period twenty five and twenty eight years are given by those authorities respectively. But as Buddhist evidence is not hostile to the first three Mauryas it may be preferred to the Puranic just as Puranic evidence to the Buddhist for the Saisunagas and the Nandas. Therefore accepting twenty four and twenty eight years for the first two Mauryas respectively we may place Asoka's accession as Dr Smith does in 325— $(24+28)=273$  B C and his coronation in 273—4 (interval between his accession and coronation according to the *Mahavamsa*)—269 B C. His final date is 269—37 (his reign period according to the Buddhist authority)=232 B C.

**Another Scheme** Another method of arriving at Asoka's initial regnal date is to start from the probable date of Rock Edict XIII which mentions Antiyoka (Antiochos Theos of Syria 261—246 B C) Turamaya (Ptolemy Philadelphos of Egypt 285—247 B C) Antikina (Antigonos Gonatas of Macedonia 278—239 B C) Maga (Magas of Cyrene 285?—258 B C) and Alkasundara (Alexander of Epirus 272—258 B C or of Corinth). Obviously these rulers are referred to in a way which leaves no doubt that they were alive when Rock Edict XIII was published. Therefore the date of this Edict must lie between 261 and 258 or allowing some time for foreign news to reach India between 260 or 259 and 257 or 256 B C and could not be later than 256 B C. Asoka conquered Kalinga in his 8th regnal year (expired) and the four years following witnessed his spiritual activity according to his own statement. Consequently about his thirteenth regnal year the fourteen Rock Edicts were probably issued. Thus the thirteenth year of his reign may be equated with 256 B C and his coronation (from which his regnal years are counted) assigned to  $256+13=269$  B C. Apparently this way of determining Asoka's date is independent of the date of Chandragupta's accession but without the guidance of the latter it is difficult

\* V. A. Smith *Asoka* (1920) pp. 69 and 70

to identify all the Western dynasts mentioned. Therefore as the date of Chandragupta is founded on his synchronism with Alexander the Great this synchronism is regarded as the sheet anchor of ancient Indian chronology.

• **Chronological Incertitudes** The incertitudes of Asokan chronology are mostly of a minor character: the exact date of Chandragupta's accession, the actual reign period of Bindusara and a few details about the dates of the Western potentates. But the major uncertainty relates to the inner chronology of the Edicts of Asoka. A few scholars have taken the Rock Edicts as posterior to the Pillar Edicts and assigned them to his twenty-eighth regnal year on the ground that Pillar Edict VII refers to *Dhammalipis* (writings on Dhamma) inscribed on stone pillars and slabs and not on *parvatas* or rocks and fails to mention the philanthropic and missionary activities of Asoka recorded in Rock Edicts II and XIII. The first omission pointed out is no omission at all. Pillar Edict VII concludes: "This scripture of the Law of Piety, wheresoever pillars of stone or tablets of stone exist, must there be recorded so that it may long endure." (The translation of the edicts quoted here and elsewhere is throughout that of Dr. Smith in his *Asoka*, 1920.) This refers to the future and implies that the Rock Edicts had already been issued. The second omission is explained in Rock Edict XIV itself. "This scripture of the Law of Piety has been written by command of His Sacred Majesty the King, sometimes condensed, sometimes of medium length and sometimes expanded and everything is not brought together everywhere. For great is my dominion and much has been written and much shall I cause to be written." An analysis of the regnal years found in the Rock and Pillar Edicts gives the clue to their relative chronology. Rock Edicts III and IV were published in the twelfth regnal year. Rock Edicts V, VIII and XIII refer to the years thirteen, ten and eight respectively. Pillar Edicts I, IV, V and VI were published in the twenty-sixth year and VII in the twenty-seventh year. Pillar Edict VI refers to an edict issued in the twelfth year (all the years expired, not current). There is no Rock Edict referring to a year later than thirteen. Therefore the priority of the Rock Edicts to the Pillar Edicts is quite clear.

**Sources** **Inscriptions** The inscriptions of Asoka, unique in the annals of Epigraphy are sufficient for all practical purposes for forming an idea of his personality and greatness. Their number and variety coupled with their dates in regnal years increase their value as contemporary records composed under the orders of the great emperor himself. Their very provenance gives significant indications to the historian. Their language is Pali with provincial dialectical variations of Prakrit and their script is Brahmi except in the North West where Kharoshthi is used. At Brahmagiri (Mysore) however the word, scribe is written in the latter script. There are frequent repetitions so much so that, excluding them, all the inscriptions contain only about 5 000 words. The style forceful and dignified could only be that of a noble soul. Chronologically the chief records may be arranged as follows: the two Minor Rock Edicts and the Bhabru Edict (257 B C), the fourteen Rock Edicts and the two Kalinga Edicts (256 B C), the Rumminder and Nigrlva Pillar Inscriptions (249 B C) and the seven Pillar Edicts (243—2 B C) and the four Minor Pillar Edicts (242—32 B C) •

**Rock Edicts** The much discussed Minor Rock Edict I reveals the phases of Asoka's religious evolution and points out the value of persistent effort. The second Edict is a summary of the moral code inculcated by the emperor: obedience to parents, kindness to relations and animals, reverence for the teacher, and devotion to truth. The Bhabru Edict expresses Asoka's faith in the *triratna* of Buddhism—the Buddha, the *Dhamma* and the Sangha—and emphasises the value of certain portions of the Buddhist Canon for the clergy and the laity. Rock Edicts I and II exhibit his deep concern for the comforts of man and beast and the provision made by him to that effect. Rock Edict III mentions official transfers once in five years to popularise the moral code. Rock Edict IV records his progress in *ahimsa*. Rock Edict V outlines the functions of the *Dharmamahamatyas*. In Rock Edict VI Asoka shows his abiding interest in his subjects' welfare and orders prompt attention to administrative business. Rock Edicts VII and VIII emphasise self-discipline and purity of the mind and the value of pilgrimages to holy places like Bodhi Gaya, visited by him in his tenth regnal

year, instead of pleasure trips. Rock Edict IX indicates the futility of birth and marriage-ceremonies and other ceremonies performed by men, especially by women, and the superiority of performing one's moral duties. Rock Edicts X and XI say that the practice of the *Dhamma* is true glory and true charity. Rock Edict XII is a classic in religious toleration, showing the broad mindedness and grandeur of Asoka. Rock Edict XIII describes the disastrous consequences of his conquest of Kalinga and regards *Dhammavijaya* or conquest by the *Dhamma* as conquest *par excellence*, it mentions his missions to various parts of India and to the Greek world. Rock Edict XIV is a postscript to the thirteen Rock Edicts. The Kalinga Edicts contain instructions to officials regarding the administration of his only conquest and evince his anxiety to conciliate the people and heal the wounds of his late war. It is significant that Rock Edict XIII describing the conquest of Kalinga is not found there.

**Pillar Edicts** Pillar Edicts I to III continue the subject of *Dhamma*, and IV contains administrative instructions to governors. V enumerates the regulations regarding the promotion of *ahimsa*, lays down the dictum that 'the living must not be fed with the living,' and mentions the annual release of prisoners. VI is a supplement to Rock Edict XII. Pillar Edict VII, 'the testament of Asoka,' is a summary of his efforts to promote the *Dhamma* within his own dominions. The Minor Pillar Edicts I to III lay down the punishment for schismatics so that 'the Sangha may be united and of long duration.' The Rummindei inscription records Asoka's visit to the Buddha's birth place and his reduction of the land revenue of the locality to one eighth.

**Historical Value of the Edicts** This detailed summary shows that though Asoka's epigraphs are religious documents, they throw abundant light on many aspects of his life and reign. The picture embraces the whole of India and takes us beyond her frontiers. But Asoka's name is found only in the Maski (the Nizam's State) Edict discovered in 1915. In other records his title *Devanampiya Piyadasi Raja* (beloved of the gods, gracious king) is used. As his object in issuing the edicts was moral and spiritual, he omits many details relevant from

other points of view. Rock Edict XIII records the number of persons killed and captured but the cause of the war is not stated. Though there is no questioning the veracity of Asoka some of his statements are hard to understand. For example the same edict says 'Even where the envoys of His Sacred Majesty do not penetrate these people too hearing His Sacred Majesty's ordinance based upon the Law of Piety and his instruction in that law practise and will practise the Law. Further to interpret the edicts properly the help of Buddhist Literature and the *Arthashastra* is necessary. Supplementary information may be gleaned from Rudradaman I's Gwalior inscription which mentions Asoka's name. The monumental remains are indispensable to the study of Mauryan art.

**The Ceylonese Chronicles.** The *Dipavamsa* and the *Mahavamsa* were compiled in the fourth and sixth centuries A.D. respectively, on the basis of older chronicles. Dr Smith used to thunder against the mendacity of their unscrupulous monkish authors but changed from an attitude of absolute scepticism in 1901 to the extent of recognising their 'solid merits' in 1919. Mahanathan, the author of the *Mahavamsa*, no doubt indulges in fiction and grotesque exaggeration and exhibits sectarian prejudice but the accusation of intentional falsehood against him is generally rejected. After the conversion of Dr Smith, a few scholars continue to hold his old opinion, dismiss the Buddhist account as concocted for rejuvenating the declining church, and regard Asoka as a Brahmanist from start to finish. But Dr Geiger's painstaking analysis of the internal evidence has revealed that the Ceylonese Chronicles at least wished to tell the truth. Their accounts of the conversion of Ceylon, Asoka's Buddhist propaganda, and the Council of Pataliputra are indispensable to a student of his history. No doubt they looked at men and things through coloured spectacles, but could not have drawn everything from their imagination. They are silent on the Kalinga war and omit Asoka's missions to the West. They afford no help to the study of his administration. With all these defects they have contributed in however small a degree to the sober history of that emperor. Scholars are generally agreed that the interval of two hundred and eighteen years between the Buddha and Asoka is reliable. It is confirmed by the Tibetan

tradition that Asoka the contemporary of a Chinese Emperor Shi hwang ti (246—210 B C), visited Khotan two hundred and fifty years after the Buddha's death. Later Chinese Buddhist travellers like Fahien and Hsuen Tsang are occasionally serviceable. Still Asoka himself is his best historian, his autobiography—the edicts—is a marvellous combination of history and literature.

**Early Life of Asoka.** Asoka served his father as Viceroy of Taxila and Ujjain in succession and was probably raised to the dignity of Crown Prince though he was not the eldest son of Bindusara. He seems to have been originally a follower of Brahmanism (without inclining towards Jainism or Buddhism), consuming potfuls of meat, enjoying the pleasures of the chase and the bottle, and exhibiting interest in dancing and such amusements. He lived a worldly life but without any tinge of vice. From his Viceroyalty of Ujjain he hastened to the sick bed of his father. On the death of Bindusara about 273 B C the succession seems to have been disputed, and Asoka succeeded in securing the throne against his elder brother, Susima. Probably the contest was prolonged and hence the necessity to postpone his coronation for four years till about 269 B C. Some of his edicts are dated in regnal years reckoned from his consecration. The *Maharimsa* account of his accession is vitiated by the statement that he was one of Bindusara's one hundred and one sons (though it is said that they were 'born of different mothers'), excelling all others in warlike qualities, and that he became emperor after killing 99 of his brothers. But the details given subsequently are sober and extremely probable. After his coronation he elevated his uterine brother Tissa to the position of Vice-regent. However perverted the Buddhist account may be in parts, it is not unlikely that Asoka's succession was not smooth.

**The War with Kalinga, c. 261 B C.** The cause and course of Asoka's first and last war are unknown. He expatiates in Rock Edict XIII on the effects of the war on himself and his policy. But there is a detail which gives the clue to the origin of that war. He refers to Kalinga as 'a country previously unconquered' that is to say, by his father or



grandfather in plain language the war was one of unprovoked aggression, and the possibility of revolt being its cause is excluded. The mantle of his father fell upon him, and the setback to Bindusara's triumphant progress in South India transferred the completion of his task to his son. But the terrible slaughter and unnumbered deaths on the unnamed battle field lacerated the heart of Asoka and drew him to the teachings of a man (the Buddha) who regarded even righteous indignation as a contradiction in terms. He was constitutionally incapable of shedding crocodile tears. The unmerited sufferings of the clergy and the laity of all denominations, leading virtuous lives filled him with pain and shame. He realised the wickedness of worldly conquest and the beauty of moral and spiritual triumph. The first effects of the Kalinga war were on Asoka himself. 'Directly after' that war in his eighth regnal year (expired) he became a Buddhist and persevered in purifying and beautifying his own life so much so that he turned out to be an embodiment of Buddhist virtue. But he says nothing about the person who initiated him into Buddhism. The war resulted in the annexation of Kalinga to the Maurya Empire, and thus was witnessed the culmination of political integration which had been started by Bimbisara and Ajatasatru. At no time after Asoka did India become so much unified politically under Hindu sovereigns as in the reign of that Maurya. Further he gradually introduced the Buddhist spirit into his administration and resolved to change his foreign policy in the direction of peace. Thus the Kalinga war produced far reaching effects on Asoka and his policy. Still it should be remembered that he was too much of an imperialist to effect a rendition of Kalinga. His pacific policy was not unqualified. 'Should any one do him harm that too must be borne with by His Sacred Majesty as far as it can possibly be borne with. They (the forest folk) are bidden to turn from their (evil) ways that they be not chastised.'

**After the War** About 261 B. C. Asoka became a *Salya Upasaka* (Buddhist lay disciple) and more than two and a half years after, a *Bikshu* (monk) or a *Bikshugatika* (one who conforms to the monk's ways). In 259 B. C. he gave up hunting, visited Bodhi Gaya and organised missions. Special

officers to supervise and speed up the progress of *Dhamma* were appointed in 256 B C. In 249 B C he went to the birth place of the Buddha the Lumbini garden near Kapilavastu. According to Northern Indian tradition he visited also the other holy places of Buddhism—Sarnath Sravasti and Kusinagara—and was escorted by his *guru* Upagupta. At the request of Tissa a mission under Mahendra was sent to Ceylon. About 240 B C Asoka convoked the third Buddhist Council at Pataliputra to strengthen the Sangha against internal mischief mongers. It is not likely that he abdicated. He died about 232 B C perhaps at Taxila. Asoka's career may be unequally divided into two periods—273 to 261 B C and 261 to 232 B C. Though the sharp contrast between the wicked and virtuous emperor made by the *Maharimsa* is untenable it is clear that the Kalinga war marks a seminal epoch in his life and reign and in the history of India and the world.

**Extent of the Maurya Empire** The North West frontier is demarcated by Chandragupta and Seleukos must have continued unchanged as friendly relations subsisted between Bindusara and Asoka and the Western powers. Asoka mentions Antiochos of Syria as if he were his next door neighbour and his Rock Edicts are found on the other side of the Indus at Shahbazgarhi. Huen Tsang testifies to his building activity in Afghanistan. The tradition as recorded by Kalhana avers that he executed public works in Kashmir and built a new capital. That the Nepalese Tarai was imperial territory is clear from the Rumminder Pillar inscription. Local tradition and monuments indicate that Nepal was within the Maurya Empire. Fa hien and Huen Tsang mention Asokan *stupas* at Tamralipta (Tamluk) and other places in Bengal. Rock Edict XIII and the Kalinga Edicts prove Asoka's annexation and administration of Kalinga. In the region between the Krishna and the Tungabhadra (the Raichur Doab) Minor Rock Edicts were discovered at Maski in 1915 and at Koppal in 1931 on the Gavimath and Palkigundu hills mid way between Maski and Siddapura. Between the Hagar (tributary of the Tungabhadra) and the North Pennar the Minor Rock Edict and Rock Edicts I to XIII were brought to light in 1929 at Jonnagiri Yerragudi (near Gooty, Kurnool District).

This discovery is of great importance because the Minor Rock Edict gives additional information regarding the dissemination of the royal message by officials and non-officials and because of the existence of the Rock Edicts on the southern border of the empire. Between the Tungabhadra and the Hagari there are the Minor Rock Edicts at Siddapura, Jatinga, Ramesvara and Brahmagiri (all in the Chitaldrug District, Mysore), discovered in the last decade of the last century. In Rock Edict II the Tamil kingdoms are mentioned as neighbours and bracketed with Syria, etc. Rock Edict XIII again puts those kingdoms in the category of neighbouring states along with the dominions of Greek princes. Therefore the Chitaldrug District of Mysore was the southernmost part of the Maurya Empire as the Edicts discovered between 1910 and 1931 are to the North and North East of it. The Rock Edicts at Sopara near Bombay and at Girnar in Kathiawar are evidence of Asoka's authority in Western India. Moreover the Girnar record of Rudradaman I mentions the engineering works executed for Lake Sudarsana by Tushaspha on behalf of Asoka. In short the Mauryan Empire under Asoka was much larger than British India at the present day. A few scholars however regard the mere existence of Asoka's epigraphs in South India as no adequate proof of his sovereignty over the region in which they are found, on the ground that the publication of ethical dissertations might well have been permitted outside the empire. But the Minor Rock Edict I, outlining Asoka's religious progress during four years, records his instructions to the *Mahamatras* of Isila conveyed through the *Viceroy and ministers of Savarnagiri*. Thus the technique of official communication is observed, and there is no doubt that the provenance of Asoka's edicts indicates the extent of his empire.

**Asoka as a Buddhist** There is no doubt that in the beginning Asoka was not a Buddhist. The *Maharamsa* and Rock Edicts I and VIII giving reminiscences of his early life would make him a follower of the orthodox religion and negative the opinion of a few scholars that he was a Jain to start with because he favoured the Jains and Ajivikas in the light of the edicts and introduced, according to Kalliana and Abul Fazl, Jainism into Kashmir. Recently some have denied

his conversion to Buddhism by rejecting the *Mahavamsa* account and characterising the *Dhamma* expounded in the edicts as Brahmanical. A few others while accepting the Buddhist role of Asoka have sought to date his conversion in the last decade of his reign.

Asoka was unquestionably a Buddhist because the Minor Rock Edict I mentions that he became an *Upasaka* and the Vaski version uses the term *Sakya Upasaka*. A Buddhist *Upasaka* must have taken refuge in the Buddha, the *Dhamma* and the Sangha. Asoka's entry into the Sangha may be open to doubt and the relevant passage is taken by some to mean mere association with the Order. The Bhabru Edict is the most definite evidence of his religion. It is addressed to the Sangha and expresses his faith in the Buddhist *triratna* and his conviction that everything said by *Bhagavan* Buddha has been well and truly said. Further Buddhism is referred to as the *Saddhamma* and seven passages from the Buddhist Canon are placed before the clergy and the laity for their constant study and meditation. The point is raised that since Asoka spoke to the monks he spoke in a way suited to the occasion. But could similar addresses of his to the Brahmanical or Jain Order be produced? If he had been a non-Buddhist in constant association with all religious denominations, why this partiality to the Buddhist Sangha? Does Asoka mention anywhere what *Bhagavan* Mahavira and Brahmanical *Rishis* have said? Does he refer to any other religion than Buddhism as the *Saddhamma*? The Minor Pillar Edicts I to III deal with his measures for strengthening the Buddhist Sangha against internal dissensions so that the Sangha may be united and of long duration. Do his inscriptions show that he desired and worked for the union and longevity of other sects in the way he did for Buddhism? He visited the place of the Buddha's birth and exclaimed

Here was *Bhagavan* Buddha born and further reduced the land tax of the locality. Would a Brahmanist speak against ceremonies like Asoka in Rock Edict IV? He organised missionary activity on a large scale in the spirit of the Buddha. Further according to literary evidence he held the third Buddhist Council and promoted the fortunes of Buddhism in other ways. It is interesting to refer to a statue of Asoka in Buddhist

monastic garb. It is said that the edicts do not mention the word or conception of *nirvana* and that the goal of heaven is placed before the people. But Asoka did not preach doctrinal Buddhism to his subjects. Moreover, during the two centuries following the Buddha's *nirvana*, his religion was slowly changing and incorporating popular superstitions so much so that in a sense and to a certain extent the Buddha himself was not a Buddhist. When it is said that Asoka's *Dhamma* is not Buddhist, it should be borne in mind that it was the spirit of Buddhist morality that was new, not its letter. Buddhism as the grandest protest against Vedic sacrifices, stressed the doctrine of *ahimsa* though not to the extent that Jainism did. In the edicts the emphasis on *ahimsa* is fundamental and from this point of view alone Asoka could be regarded as a Buddhist. The numerous modifications of that doctrine which he tolerated in order to carry his subjects with him would reveal him as a non-Jain. Dr Fleet's view is that the Minor Rock Edict I, giving the number 256 at the end, was issued 256 years after the Buddha's death, i.e. 256-218 (interval between that event and Asoka's coronation)=38 years after the latter event. Since he reigned only for thirty-seven years, that edict must be relegated to the period of his retirement after abdication. Asoka became a Buddhist in his thirtieth regnal year and a nominal monk two and a half years subsequently. In his thirty-eighth regnal year he abdicated and became a true monk. From his place of retirement, he proclaimed Buddhism as the true religion. But this interpretation is not generally accepted as 256 is not treated as a date and as there is no positive evidence for Asoka's abdication. Moreover, Rock Edict XIII definitely says that his appreciation of Buddhism commenced immediately after the Kalinga war. Dr Fleet thinks that no one could have been king and monk at the same time for a long time. But the role of a *Bikshugatika*, if not of a *Bikshu*, Asoka probably played.

**His Patronage of Buddhism (a) Missions** Many ways were explored by Asoka towards the realisation of his cherished ambition of disseminating Buddhism. His organisation of Indian and foreign missions was the most effective means of furthering his favourite object. Rock Edict XIII

says that missionaries were sent to Syria, Egypt, Cyrene, Epirus and Macedonia, to the Cholas and the Pandyas, and to the North Western and Southern parts of his empire including the Maratha and Andhra countries. The Ceylonese Chronicles give a list of the missions organised by the Sangha, and the names of the leading missionaries mentioned are partly confirmed by the archaeological remains near Sanchi. As far as the Indian regions are concerned, the only discrepancy between the two lists relates to Suvarnabhumi if it is identified with Burma and not with the Suvarnagiri Viceroyalty (Dakhan). The mention of Ceylon in the Chronicles clears up the doubtful reference to it in the edicts. The only serious omission from the Buddhist list is the Greek world. But the historicity of the Western missions cannot be questioned in the light of Asoka's specific statement and of the prevalence of Buddhist ideas in Western Asia on the eve of the rise of Christianity. It appears however, that Asoka's estimate of the success of his missionary labours is exaggerated, as he speaks of the triumph of the *Dhamma* not only in the whole of India and in the five kingdoms of the West, belonging to three continents, but also in places beyond the reach of his agents. Obviously the effects of missionary propaganda could not have been the same everywhere.

(b) **Edicts** The term edict means a command from a legal superior enforced by penalties for its violation. Though a few of the inscriptions record administrative orders, a large number of them are exhortations to people to follow the prescribed ideal. They may better be called royal proclamations partaking of the character of pontifical pronouncements. The question of the Buddhist or Brahmanical character of the *Dhamma* expounded by Asoka can be answered if it is remembered that there is no fundamental difference between Buddhist and Brahmanical ethics, the difference between them is one of emphasis or degree. Asoka places moral precepts before all, irrespective of their caste. Like the Buddha he discarded the *Varnadharma*. His ethics is practical and rational, depending on no supernatural sanctions. Though some of the virtues he inculcates are as old as Brahmanism, his discouragement of *himsa* of all kinds and his repeated

references to the subject of *ahimsa* prove his Buddhist convictions. A second virtue emphasised by him in some of the noble passages of the edicts is religious toleration. Though this virtue was to some extent stultified by the quarrelling Buddhist sects of the age it was characteristic of the Buddha who loved the true Brahman. In the history of persecution it is to be said to the credit of the Buddhist that he occupies the last place. A Brahmanical Sutrakara in Asoka's imperial position would never have preached toleration so eloquently and rationally as the Buddhist emperor did. A third point stressed in the edicts is the happiness of man and beast. Asoka practised the virtues he preached and showed how his scheme of ethical conduct could be followed by the meanest of mortals. Further, by means of his edicts, he wanted to explain the measures he had taken from time to time for the promotion of the *Dhamma*. Pillar Edict VII, the last of his great edicts sums up such measures and gives the quintessence of his *Dhamma*. Compassion, liberality, truth, purity, gentleness and saintliness. In Minor Rock Edict II he admits that his teaching is old. On the whole the *Dhamma* of the edicts was intended for ordinary men so that they might aim at Asoka's Buddhist standpoint.

(c) **Administrative Arrangements** Asoka utilised the machinery of government to further his moral and religious purpose. Rock Edict III (257) directs officials of all grades to see to the promotion of the *Dhamma*. The Yerragudi Minor Rock Edict I says that the message should be officially sent to the *Rajulas* who were to proclaim it to the people and religious teachers were expected to teach it to their resident pupils and those who had learnt it should communicate it to their relatives. In 256 special officers called *Dharmamahamatras* and *Dharmayuktas* (Censors and Assistant Censors) were appointed to preach and enforce the *Dhamma*. Rock Edict V and Pillar Edict VII describe their work and the extent of their jurisdiction. They took cognisance of injury to animals and other violations of the moral code. They were to moderate the rigours of the criminal law by recommending exemptions in special cases taking into consideration the old age, misfortune and family misfortune of the convicted. They were employed everywhere, among all

sects and classes high and low, and even the royal household was not excluded from their ubiquitous activity. Rock Edict XII refers to Censors of women. Further, about 240 B C, the third Buddhist Council was held at the capital in order to rid the Sangha of its internal enemies. The Minor Pillar Edicts I to III declare that the punishment for monks and nuns who promote discord is the replacement of their yellow by white robes and expulsion.

(d) **Royal Example** Above all, Asoka relied for the accomplishment of his task on the powerful incentive his own example would supply to his subjects. He put into practice the code of conduct he officially recommended, not only by his pure life untainted by *himsa*, and his pious tours, but also by his unceasing benevolent activity for 'man and beast'. In 259 B C he reduced the slaughter of animals in the royal kitchen to three and gave up hunting. Two years later he eschewed meat diet altogether. Animal sacrifice and certain kinds of merry making were interdicted at Pataliputra. Rock Edict II says that hospitals were erected for men and animals throughout India and in the Western countries with which he had relations and travelling was made comfortable by the provision of wells and planting of trees on the roads. In 243 B C was issued an ordinance (Pillar Edict V) extending to the whole empire and applicable to all people: a large number of animals like parrots, geese, porcupines, monkeys and rhinoceroses should under no circumstances be killed. Fish was not to be sold or caught on certain days of the year, castration and branding of animals were prohibited on a few specified days. Pillar Edict VII mentions the planting of banyan trees and mango groves, the digging of wells, and the construction of rest houses and water sheds and expresses the hope that 'whatsoever meritorious deeds have been done by me, those deeds mankind will conform to and imitate'. Asoka practically concludes the edict by reverting to his favourite theme: 'The superiority of reflection is shown by the growth of piety among men and the more complete abstention from killing animate beings and from the sacrificial slaughter of living creatures'.

**Consequences of his pro-Buddhist Policy** Asoka's grand efforts on behalf of Buddhism promoted its fortunes not



only in India but also beyond her limits. Though the spread of Buddhist ideas and morality must have been much slower than was imagined by the emperor, there is no doubt that he was responsible for starting his religion on its triumphant career. He was no opportunist succumbing to the growing influence of a powerful faith, but a flawless imperial saint who, on account of his convictions, gave his helping hand to a noble but struggling religion. He thus became the greatest figure in Buddhist annals though next only to the Buddha. By contributing to the progress of Buddhism he crowned himself with glory. But the view is advanced in some quarters that he was the grave-digger of that religion. The point of the charge is that his donations to the Church made her less self-reliant and more corrupt than she would otherwise have been. The disappearance of Buddhism from India is a "terribly obscure" (Poussin) problem, and Hinayanist Asoka should not be held accountable for the later developments of Buddhism and of the chief religion opposed to it. Similarly his espousal of Buddhist pacifism is supposed by some to have debilitated the Maurya Empire, though the danger to it came after his death. He is painted by a few scholars as the arch emasculator of India on the ground that his ardent advocacy of pacifism and vegetarianism destroyed the warlike spirit of the Indian people. But, despite his true religious spirit, he was an imperialist. Though he condemned aggressive conquests he kept his powder dry for defence. His resolve to avoid warfare as far as possible was not the offspring of defeat; he did not make a virtue of necessity. He did not degenerate into a carpet knight by his conversion to the religion of the prince of peace (the Buddha). Nor did India cease to be military in the centuries following his reign. Further it is said that, by his pro-Buddhist policy, he alienated from his government and his dynasty the sympathy of the followers of Brahmanism, and that his ordinances enforcing *ahimsa* with the assistance of special officers must have promoted a reaction among his Brahmanical subjects against his policy. In other words, his Buddhist zeal prepared the way for the downfall of the Maurya Empire. No doubt there must have been a flutter in the dovecotes of Brahmanical orthodoxy, and there are reasons for believing that the movement ultimately led by Pushyamitra

Sunga must have started under the pressure of Asoka's religious policy. But Asoka's policy was not tyrannical, and his moderation in applying his principles and convictions and his consideration for all classes of his subjects could never be regarded as disastrous to his empire or to the welfare of his people. We have seen the character of his legislation against animal slaughter. There was room for discontent among the Brahmanists, but no adequate cause for their revolt. Moreover, their religion was not eclipsed or superseded by Buddhism during Asoka's reign. Therefore it is difficult to subscribe to the view that his policy was fatal to Buddhism, the Maurya Empire or India.

**The Doctrine of Toleration** From the wider historical and modern points of view, Asoka's formulation of the doctrine of toleration is of the greatest interest. It is astonishing that in the third century B.C. a conception of religious toleration was attained which cannot be bettered even today, but our problems are more complex. Compromise, the life blood of harmonious life, is difficult amidst the clash of opposing convictions, and particularly so in the field of religion where much can neither be proved nor disproved. A rational outlook will recognise this peculiarity of religious views and embrace the golden mean, but normally such a *via media* is rejected with scorn. Some thinkers hold that the first note of a truly cultured man is his freedom from bigotry, and regard that people as most civilised who have been tainted least by the psychology of persecution. Ancient India witnessed religious strife now and then, producing more heat than light, but on the whole she was wedded to the doctrine of toleration, thanks to Asoka in particular who gave classic phrasing and astonishing application to that doctrine. No doubt there are other instances and parallels, but nothing approaching to the intellectual calibre and moral exaltation of Asoka.

Rock Edict XII is a monument of Asoka's piety and wisdom. His Sacred Majesty does reverence to men of all sects whether ascetics or householders, by gifts and various forms of reverence. His Sacred Majesty, however, cares not so much for gifts or external reverence as that there should be a growth of the essence of the matter in all sects. The growth of

the essence of the matter assumes various forms, but the root of it is restraint of speech, to wit, a man must not do reverence to his own sect or disparage that of another without reason. Depreciation should be for specific reasons only, because the sects of other people all deserve reverence for one reason or another. By thus acting a man exalts his own sect and at the same time does service to the sects of other people. By acting contrariwise a man hurts his own sect and does disservice to the sects of other people. For he who does reverence to his own sect while disparaging the sects of others wholly from attachment to his own, with intent to enhance the splendour of his own sect, in reality by such conduct inflicts the severest injury on his own sect. While discussion and criticism are not discountenanced, it is urged that they should be informed by reason. While all religious views are not regarded as tenable to the same extent, the modicum of truth in every sectarian view is recognised. The most valuable dictum relates to the serious harm done to religion by its over zealous votaries oblivious of the injury they are causing to their own beloved faith. Asoka's support to various sects was discriminate. Pillar Edict VI repeats that "all denominations are revered by me with various forms of reverence" and adds that "personal adherence to one's own creed is the chief thing in my opinion". The restraint of speech underlined by Asoka was practised by him even when he fundamentally differed from those holding contrary views. Rock Edict IX discountenances ceremonies in an admirable manner, though the ceremonies performed by women are characterised as "trivial and worthless". He does not condemn ceremonies altogether, but says that they have "to be performed although that kind bears little fruit" and is of "doubtful efficacy". Granting that ceremonies occasionally secure the desired object, "proper treatment of slaves and servants, honour to teachers, gentleness towards living creatures and liberality towards ascetics and Brahmins" are truly spiritual even if they do not serve worldly ends. Further, like the Buddha Asoka says that "all men are my children". Still he draws pointed attention to his favourite children—Buddhist monks and nuns—in Minor Pillar Edict III. Though the lion's share of his patronage was bestowed upon Buddhists, he extended

his benefactions to Brahmins, Jains and Ajivikas. According to his cave dedicatory inscriptions, he provided the Ajivikas with rock-cut caves near Gava well polished inside, for their residence, in 257 and 250 B.C. He did not stultify his doctrine of toleration by going to its logical extreme of condoning anything that might be done in the name of religion. He expected from all sects a certain degree of conformity to his by no means rigid moral code and saw to its enforcement by special officers of high status. In other words like Akbar, he refused to tolerate practices which made his conscience uneasy. We have seen how his doctrine of *ahimsa* progressed from time to time.

**Administration: Aims and Methods** Asoka aimed at the material, moral and spiritual elevation of his subjects civilised and semi civilised, and at the enthronement of the *Arthashastra* ideal of benevolent monarchy, assisted by capable and honest officials. Pillar Edict I says: "My Agents whether of high, low or middle rank, themselves conform to my teaching and lead others in the right way—fickle people must be led in the right way—likewise also the Wardens of the Marches (frontier officers)." In Pillar Edict IV the subject is continued: "To my Governors (*Rajulas*) set over many hundred thousand people I have granted independence in the award of honours and penalties in order that the Governors confidently and fearlessly may perform their duties, bestow welfare and happiness upon the people of the country. They will ascertain the causes of happiness or unhappiness. Just as a man having made over his child to a skilful nurse feels confident and says to himself 'the skilful nurse is eager to care for the happiness of my child' even so my Governors have been created for the welfare and happiness of the country, with intent that fearlessly, confidently and quietly they may perform their duties. The Kalinga Edict I contains the instructions of Asoka to his officers dealing with the frontier tribes of the recently annexed kingdom who had not been brought under imperial administrative control. "All men are my children and just as I desire for my children that they may enjoy every kind of prosperity and happiness in this world and in the next, so also I desire the same for all men. You must make these people trust me and grasp the truth that

the king is to us even as a father he loves us even as he loves himself we are to the king even as his children By so doing you may win heaven and also discharge your debt to me The second edict applies to the peaceful portion of Kalinga and is addressed to the town officers Whatsoever my views are I desire them to be acted on in practice and carried into effect by certain means You have been set over many thousands of living beings that you may gain the affections of good men All men are my children You however do not grasp this truth to its full extent It happens that some individual incurs imprisonment or torture and when the result is his imprisonment without due cause many other people are deeply grieved In such a case you must desire to do justice The root of the whole matter lies in perseverance and patience in applying this principle of government The indolent man cannot rouse himself to move yet one must needs move a lvanee go on Ill performance of this duty (to carry out the royal instructions) can never gain my regard whereas in fulfilling my instructions you will gain heaven and also pay your debt to me This stress is laid on governmental activity and guidance with a view to the promotion of popular welfare Public servants should be honest and energetic with a desire to do justice to the people so that reasonable and good men might be well disposed towards the government

**Machinery of Government** Only the most necessary changes were made by Asoka in the existing mechanism of government The Suvarnagiri (near Maski) Viceroyalty must have been created by his father The annexation of Kalinga added the Viceroyalty of Tosali Therefore on the whole there were four provinces in Northern India and two in South India the home province Taxila Ujjain Gernar Tosali and Suvarnagiri The Pillar Edicts encircle the heart of the empire the Rock Edicts indicating the more distant parts of it Though the old rulers were continued in some regions subject to imperial control some tribes being in a state of semi independence and local autonomy urban and rural conceded centralisation of authority was substantial regard being had to the vastness of the imperial territory The activity of the ministerial council is referred to in Rock

**Edict VI** In order to give a filip to Buddhist propaganda, new officers called *Dharmamahamatras* were appointed, and we have seen the wide range of their activity. Rock Edict III mentions official quinquennial transfers for promoting the cause of the *Dhamma*. The Kalinga Edict II alludes to quinquennial and triennial transfers of officials 'of mild and temperate disposition and regardful of the sanctity of life' in order to improve the administration of criminal justice. Pillar Edict IV says "For as much as it is desirable that there should be uniformity in judicial procedure and uniformity in penalties, from this time forward my rule is this 'To condemned men lying in prison under sentence of death a respite of three days is granted by me' (During that interval) the relatives in some cases will arrange for a revision in order to save their lives, or in order to obtain a revision will give alms with a view to the next world or will observe fasting. For my desire is that, even when their time is irrevocably fixed, they (the condemned) may gain the next world, while among the people various pious practices may increase, including self-control and liberality. Further, Asoka continued the old practice of annual release of prisoners, probably on his birthday.

**Personnel of Government** For the best results Asoka relied on the personnel of government. His great example of unceasing activity as a moral duty reminds us of Harsha, Sher Shah and Aurangzib. We should not suppose he believed that legislation would do the whole task of moral transformation. The Minor Rock Edict I illustrates the high productivity of human energy. Rock Edict VI says "In all places I attend to the affairs of the people. I never feel satisfaction in my exertions and dispatch of business. For work I must for the welfare of all the folk, and of that again, the root is energy and the dispatch of business.' Hence Asoka's frequent instructions and exhortations to his officers in order to change the spirit of the administration. Kautilyan severity must have been modified substantially by the energy and humanity of the Buddhist Emperor whose special ordinances were bound to increase the burden of imperial administration.

**The Splendour of Asoka** His Character Asoka was a man of noble purpose who incessantly laboured to realise

it His support to Buddhism was not tarnished by any personal or dynastic motive His missionary labour in the Indian and Greek worlds is a bold idea though its fortunes everywhere were not the same His other conception was equally novel the publication of edicts to spread the *Dhamma* and give permanency to his teaching That his edicts could not alone solve the problem of Buddhist expansion he himself knew He relied more on the human agency at his disposal His admirably sustained energy stimulated the activity of others In short he knew how to promote a great cause That Buddhism did not supersede Brahmanism in India cannot be regarded as the measure of his failure, for he has expounded his conviction that one should adhere to one's own faith From the point of view of his religious role, he has been compared with St Paul, Constantine and Charlemagne But 'if a man's fame can be measured by the number of hearts who revere his memory, by the number of lips who have mentioned and still mention him with honour, Asoka is more famous than Charlemagne or Caesar'\*. The comparison of Asoka with St Paul is more appropriate in so far as both made their respective religions great and universal but, while Asoka made Buddhism simple, St Paul made Christianity complex The truer parallel to Asoka is found by some in Marcus Aurelius but it is really difficult to compare him with others for the simple reason that he was unique Kanishka not Asoka, was the Constantine of Buddhism, because the former submitted to the growing influence of a great religion, whereas the latter made a small religion great uninfluenced by considerations of personal profit In spite of his piety and saintliness, the strength of Asoka as a monarch was never impaired Even when he speaks about the glory of *Dharmavijaya*, he shows his determination not to be made the victim of his own ideal He was not a dreamer, but a man of practical genius If Alexander worked for the unity of mankind towards the close of his career, Asoka tried as far as possible to make man think of his duty to the dumb animals and labour in the cause of man and beast His

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\*Koppes quoted in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (11th ed 1911) 1929 II, p 516.

teaching is so universal as to appeal to the cultured man of today. Though India ultimately rejected his religion, much of his gospel was incorporated in the wisdom of the country.

**Ideals** There are very few examples in history of a self imposed check on imperialism. After the Kalinga war Asoka stood for non aggression, but would not give up his position as an imperialist. He would do everything to heal the wounds of Kalinga short of its liberation from imperial clutches. In administration he was wedded to the *matrap* (mother and father) theory of monarchy, democracy coming in by the back door in the Kautilyan manner. Though he was the noblest exponent of religious toleration, he would insist upon a certain degree of conformity to the dictates of reason and conscience. He was a rationalist preaching practical ethics but with reference to the goal of heaven and he would not mystify and confound by revelation and metaphysics. His social ideal was the unity of mankind under the sovereignty of the *Dhamma*, universal in its connotation and application, and the happiness of 'man and beast'.

**Achievements** As far as Asoka was concerned, he was true to his ideals, compromising with them only to suit the standard of his people. But, after his death his rationalist social ideals did not flourish in a country where the caste system had become well established, if not cast iron. His doctrines of *ahimsa* and toleration however, effected a profound change in the Brahmanical outlook on life. But his ideal of peace and non aggression found no enthusiasts later. He wanted his sons and grandsons to be strong and peaceful, he never stood for peace at any price.

**Compared with Alexander and Caesar** A historian of the world thinks that Asoka was 'the greatest of kings, far in advance of his age,' surpassing Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar and other renowned leaders of mankind. A historian of Asoka endorses that opinion. An answer to the question of Asoka's true place in world history depends on our conception of a monarch's duties. A great sovereign in the days with which we are at present concerned, should possess, in brief, character, military ability and statesmanship. If he were a saint and prophet, so much the better, but he should



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not be deficient as a general, administrator or statesman. Asoka's character is almost perfect. A few scholars regard him as vain and boastful. His sternest critic remarks that 'had Asoka been greater than he was, he would not have attempted the impossible. We should have had no edicts'.<sup>6\*</sup> As regards his vanity, the charge is based on the old interpretation of a famous passage in the Minor Rock Edict I that Asoka claims to have dethroned the Brahmins from their position of *bhudevas* (gods on earth), but the generally accepted sense of the passage, as now understood, is that he made irreligious people religious by his exertions. No doubt some of his statements are too sweeping to be accepted without modification. His estimate of the success of his missions is an instance in point, besides his claim to have made curative arrangements for men and animals in the Tamil kingdoms and even in the dominions of Antiochos Theos and his neighbours. Exaggerations apart, certain qualities appreciated in great men and prophets are not tolerated in ordinary mortals. To speak of Asoka's megalomania is to deny him unfairly 'the privilege of prophets to the use of "Capital I"'. In spite of a few defects revealed by the scrutiny of critics, his personal and public character is above reproach. But Alexander the Great was clean different, and the few serious flaws in his character have already been noted. As regards Caesar, he was a moral leper in his private life. While he was on the wrong side of 50 years, he fell into the clutches of the Egyptian witch, Queen Cleopatra, by whom he had a son. His sexual aberrations deserve no place in a decent chronicle. His patriotism was only enlarged selfishness. From the point of view of character, Asoka is incomparably superior to Alexander and Caesar. More people remember the name of Asoka today than that of Alexander or Caesar. Though Alexander's Empire broke up immediately after his death, he was a pioneer in cultural propaganda. His grand ideal of Perso-Macedonian unity, though unsuccessful, absorbed his energy for some time, and his methods of inter-marriage, military service and Greek education could not be regarded as wrong-headed. As a general, his claims to

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\* T. W. Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India* (1911), p. 30

greatness are unsurpassed. But Asoka's position is entirely different, we have no adequate data to pronounce on his military ability in comparison with that of past masters in the art of war. Caesar was a great general, a great statesman, a great orator, a great historian, etc., etc. Comparisons of dissimilar men are particularly difficult. Asoka had the vision of a statesman, and his social ideal, if successful, would have regenerated Indian life. In his field Asoka is unrivalled, and no comparisons are suitable. It is futile to compare him with Alexander and Caesar from the point of view of their special abilities. But historians who are prophets may choose the point of human excellence worthy of their approbation and extol or condemn kings from their own point of view. A scientific historian, however, must take into consideration all the phases of human greatness. Those who have regarded Asoka as the king of kings have looked upon him chiefly in the light of his character and moral grandeur. He was great in many respects and unique in his special sphere, and any attempt to add to his greatness will make him incredibly perfect. His real place in human history is the place of honour as King Prophet, without becoming a kill joy, he stood for a transvaluation of values appealing to the modern scientific mind.

#### SECTION IV THE LATER MAURİYAS (c 232—c 188 B.C.)

**Successors of Asoka** The interval of nearly half a century between Asoka and Pusyamitra Sunga is covered by the reigns of the ephemeral Mauriyas whose genealogy, chronology and history are uncertain except where the strangely discordant indigenous accounts occasionally agree. Asoka's polygamous household (he married five wives—Devī, Asandimitra, Karuvakī, Padmavati and Tishyarakshita) did not leave him in want of children and children's children so much so that we are not certain whether he was succeeded by his son or grandson after a long reign following his two Viceroyalties. There are authorities mentioning his son Kunala and the latter's son Dasaratha, as the immediate successor of Asoka, in Kashmir, his son Jaluka is spoken of as his direct successor and in Gandhara, his great grandson Virasena. Kunala who was blinded by the machinations of his

~dissolute step mother, Tishyarakshita, owing to his rejection of her criminal advances, while he was Viceroy of Taxila under his father is said to have reigned nominally for eight years with the assistance of his second son, Samprati. His eldest son, Dasamatha, followed him on the imperial throne. His three inscriptions in the caves of the Nagarjuni hills, near Gaya, mention his name and also his title, 'Devanampiya', and record his gift of three caves to the Ajivikas. He was succeeded by his brother, Samprati, the idol of the Jains who is said to have constructed *viharas* 'even in non Aryan countries'. His control over Pataliputra and Ujjain seems to have been intact. His successor was his son, Salisuka. The last imperial Maurya was Brihadiatha whose position in the genealogical list is not clear. Bana mentions his open assassination by his Commander in Chief Pushyamitra, during a military parade, and describes him as *pratyadurbala* or untrue to his word. The association of the later imperial Mauryas with more or less the central part of the empire argues their loss of the distant provinces. The cis Vindhyan fragment must have been overwhelmed by the uprising of Kalinga, Vidarbha and the Andhra country. Antiochos III did not invade India but crossed the Hindu Kush about 206 B.C. to renew his friendly alliance with Subhagasena, the Maurya prince of Gandhara, and obtained from him a few elephants. Kashmir and Gandhara seem to have become independent soon after the death of Asoka. The invasion of India by Demetrios must have taken place after the Sunga revolution about 188 B.C. Dr. Tarn\* gives 184--167 B.C. for his Indian career and regards Apollodotos, his relative, and Menander, his general, as his co-adjutors, "it was the ultimate break-down of the Maurya empire which gave Demetrius his opportunity." Therefore the successors of Asoka were not confronted with foreign invasion.

**Causes of Imperial Decline.** The Maurya Empire down to the death of Asoka was a *tour de force* requiring explanation rather than its decline and collapse. The triumph of

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\* *op cit* pp 133 and

centripetal forces was exceptional, whereas the operation of centrifugal tendencies was natural on a sub continent. The will and energy of masterful men, seconded by exceptionally capable ministers, created an extensive empire controlled by a complex administrative machinery. Hereditary succession could not produce a long line of able monarchs though supplemented by the education of princes on the lines prescribed in the *Arthashastra*. Generally the father's grand success would be prejudicial to the development of the latent powers if any, of the son. Bindusara and Asoka were exceptions to the rule. Our conception of monarchy in name was alien to ancient India. Moreover distance was a reality in those times of which it is difficult to gain a vivid conception in this flying age. Though there was some decentralisation in the Maurya Empire centralisation was the fundamental principle of its organisation. The successors of Asoka beginning with the gloriously blind man could not function as monarchs in the Kautilyan scheme of things. The crowd of princes and princesses and dominating beldames must have made the polygamous royal household an arena for intrigue and strife. The weakness at the centre would react on the provinces where disruptive forces would resume their normal sovereignty. The supposition that the imperial weaklings were spoiled by Buddhist pacifism cannot stand, because Asoka as revealed in the edicts emphasised this world and the next and remained a strong and healthy man. In his mood of repentance after the Kalinga war, he never contemplated the rendition of that conquest nor does he seem to have slackened imperial control. Further, some of his successors were not Buddhists. Samprati was a Jain and Jaluka was a Saiva. But even in the days of Asoka there were administrative difficulties and we have noted his troubles, consequent on the imperfect execution of his decrees by his officers pictured in the Kalinga Edict II. Literary evidence adverts to disaffection at Taxila under Bindusara and Asoka easily removed by the crown prince. All this shows the arduousness of controlling the distant provinces from Pataliputra but can never be the foundation of a theory of official oppression compassing the ruin of

the Maurya Empire as a whole. Therefore the fundamental cause of imperial decline was the incapacity of the successors of Asoka divided and quarrelling among themselves, to operate efficiently the huge and complex administrative machine, and the consequent spur offered to provincial ambition and inherent separatist tendencies

The question is discussed whether the overthrow of the Maurias was not due to the Brahmanical reaction promoted by Asoka's pro-Buddhist and anti Brahmanical policy. **Brahmanical Reaction** Rejecting extreme views, we may grant some hostility to his policy which, however, was not anti Brahmanical. What happened to the discontented *coterie* after Asoka's death we do not know. It could not have grown in strength because the successors of Asoka patronised different religions, and even his Buddhist successors could not have systematically pursued his policy. The fact is that Pushyamitra probably a Brahman, followed a definitely Brahmanical course of action and is said to have persecuted Buddhism. Therefore the religious factor cannot be dismissed altogether, nor should his militarism be regarded as Brahmanical. The fact of the matter seems to be that a palace revolution was effected by the Commander in Chief of the last imperial Maurya for reasons best known to the former, who subsequently usurped the throne espoused the cause of Brahmanism and pursued a military career. That Pushyamitra was the Maurya Commander in Chief who murdered his sovereign in broad daylight proves the unpopularity and political weakness of Brihadratha but not his pro Buddhist policy or the emasculation of the people by an over-dose of Buddhist pacifism administered to them by Asoka. To sum up, the fall of the Maurya Empire was due to internal causes, chiefly political and administrative, not to foreign invasion. The weakness of Asoka's successors stimulated the natural desire of the distant provinces to be independent. The Brahmanical reaction must, to a slight extent, have taken advantage of the ineptitude of the central authority. Though Pushyamitra's motives are not clear, he posed as the champion of Brahmanism after his usurpation of the Maurya throne.

## SECTION V RELIGION

We have followed the progress of Buddhism under Asoka and his successors. The other heterodox religion Jainism made greater progress than Buddhism before Asoka. The story of Chandragupta's southern move shows the spread of Jainism in South India. About 300 B C differences of opinion on the question of nudity vs dress divided the Jains into Digambaras (sky clad or naked) and Svetambaras (white-clad). The latter held a Council at Pataliputra without the co-operation of the others and agreed upon the Canon which was rejected by the other sect. This dual division of the Jains took final shape in the first century A D. In spite of their patronage by Asoka and Samprati their position in Magadha was slowly undermined their influence gradually spreading to Ujjain in the third century B C. The Ajivikas continued to flourish during that century thanks to the benevolence of Asoka and Dasaratha. The cults of Siva and Vishnu (Dionysos and Herakles according to the Greeks) were becoming increasingly popular in the mountainous parts and Mathura respectively. The name of Skanda appeared along with that of Siva.

## SECTION VI ECONOMIC CONDITION

**Villages and Towns** Villages were classified in many ways so as to give an idea of their resources. Though village autonomy prevailed and much co-operative work was done by the villagers for their common good the existence of a Superintendent of Cows is indicative of the interest taken by the central government in rural welfare. Towns were innumerable the more important among them were fortified the streets were supplied with drains precautions against fire were taken and sanitary regulations were enforced.

**Agriculture** Besides numerous grains the cultivation of sugarcane was facilitated by the government's attention to irrigation. Megasthenes notes that the agriculturists were laborious intelligent frugal and honest and untroubled by war. There was a Superintendent of Forests to develop their resources.



**Industry** The principal industries were mining weaving manufacture of liquor and ship building The art of the carpenter and the stone-cutter was well developed the latter is best illustrated by Maurya sculpture The other industries were shoe making dyeing pottery, fishing manufacture of flour and sugar and extraction of oil The guild organisation was in a flourishing condition The artisan was specially protected by the government Slavery existed Kautilya's regulations regarding the proper treatment of slaves and labourers are detailed

**Trade and Currency** The Superintendent of Ships was empowered to levy port taxes and administer the harbour regulations The attention given to this subject in the *Arthashastra* and Asoka's references to Western kingdoms are proof positive of the commercial relations of India with foreign countries Internal trade was promoted by rivers canals and roads The great trunk road connected Patalputra with Taxila and the Indus Valley The facilities for travellers provided by Asoka on the roads were by no means his innovations The trade with South India was active and Kautilya prefers this trade in diamonds pearls gold and conch shells to that with the Himalayan countries in blankets, skins and horses There was strict government control of trade internal and foreign The trade guilds were prosperous and enjoyed many privileges The *Arthashastra* mentions gold, silver and copper coins and the *adesa* or bill of exchange The legal rate of interest was fifteen per cent per annum

**Comforts and Luxuries** The absence of famines alluded to by Megasthenes is contradicted by the Jain tradition of a twelve-year famine and by the government's famine policy detailed in the *Arthashastra* He speaks of the simplicity and sobriety of the people who loved fine clothes and gold ornaments The high material civilization of the age and the greatness of the empire gave much scope for luxurious living On the whole life was cheerful with the comforts of life well provided and with popular entertainments arranged by the emperor and the industrial and commercial magnates The case of the indigent was attended to by the government It is

profoundly significant that Kautilya says "Wealth alone is important inasmuch as charity and desire depend upon wealth for their realisation. The root of wealth is activity."

## SECTION VII SOCIAL LIFE

**Caste** The caste system became complex the multiplicity of sub-castes was due to intercaste marriages and the growth of professional life. Though the Brahmans functioned as priests and though the *Purohita* a great officer of the king was a Brahman their profession as priests was not the same as in the Vedic age. Their chief business was to live in forest *asramas* acquire spiritual knowledge and impart it to their pupils. Their advice was sought after by kings in important matters. They enjoyed some privileges they were not taxed and their property should not be taken away in any circumstances they were not to be sentenced to death or awarded corporal punishment in extreme cases they might be branded or exiled. As they lived on public charity their position was adversely affected through the impetus given to *sannyasa* or renunciation of the world by Buddhism and Jainism. Therefore the *Arthashastra* prohibits *sannyasa* in the case of those who had made no provision for their wives and children. The rise of Sudra dynasties like the Nandas and the Mauryas gave a blow to the old conception of Kshatriya sovereignty and the teaching of Asoka popular and universal could not but affect the old social system though he bracketed the Brahmans with ascetics and patronised them.

**Women** The *Arthashastra* is more liberal to women than the *Dharma Sutras* and tempers their rigidity and puritanism. Eight forms of marriage are mentioned in it as in them but it allows greater freedom to individuals. *Brahma*—gift of a girl with jewels. *Prajapatya*—marriage for the performance of sacred duties by man and woman. *Arsha*—exchange of a girl for a couple of cows. *Dana*—marriage with a sacrificing priest. *Gandharva*—love marriage. *Asura*—mercenary marriage. *Rakshasa*—marriage after kidnapping and *Paisacha*—abduction of a girl in sleep and in a state of inebriation. The distinction between the first two forms of marriage is not clarified by the Sastrakars. The first four kinds are old and

become valid with the father's consent and the others with the approval of father and mother. But the validity of a marriage generally depends on the agreement of the parties concerned. So says the statesmanlike Kautilya.

A woman may be divorced on account of her infertility or for not giving birth to sons. Women are created for the sake of sons. The husband may be divorced by the wife for his long absence from her, if he becomes a seditionist, if he is likely to imperil her life, if he has lost caste, or if he becomes impotent. Separation on account of mutual hatred may be effected with the consent of both.

Three grounds for remarriage of women are approved: long absence of husbands abroad, their taking to *sannyasa*; and their death, in these cases, remarriage is with the husband's brother. If a woman is not maintained by her husband's relatives during his absence, she may remarry anybody she likes. Widows remarrying persons against the wishes of their fathers in law should return to them any gifts received from them and from their own deceased husbands. Cruelty of husbands to wives and of wives to husbands is punishable. There are sections in the *Arthashastra* dealing with maintenance of women, their elopement, vagrancy, etc. Megasthenes refers to polygamy and "purchase of wives for a pair of oxen" (obviously the *Arsha* form of marriage mentioned above). The custom of *sati* is mentioned by Greek writers, who explain it as the outcome of the poisoning of husbands prevalent once upon a time.

The Superintendent of *ganikas* or prostitutes paid, taxed and protected them and in general looked after their welfare. Offences against them were defined and punished, and their good behaviour was brought under state control. Their education in the relevant arts (music, vocal and instrumental, dancing, acting, painting, reading, writing, making of scents and garlands, massage etc.) was entrusted to teachers paid by the state. The king, his court and the public patronised beautiful and accomplished prostitutes, some of whom were employed as spies. On

payment of a sum of money by them, they might be made free. When they became old and unattractive, they were transferred to the royal kitchen or appointed as nurses. Their sons were trained for the profession of actors. We do not know whether they were medically examined by the state, which certainly allowed them private practice.

## SECTION VIII CULTURE

**Writing and Language.** Kautilya's chapter on royal writs is decisive proof of the advance of writing and mentions the room for keeping the state records. Government accounts and documents were extensive. The inscriptions of Asoka afford further evidence of the inaccuracy of the statement of Megasthenes that there were no written laws and that Indians were ignorant of writing. Sanskrit was confined to Brahmanical religious and profane literature, whereas the Prakrits were used for administrative and social purposes. The Jains and the Buddhists employed the language of the people for religious propaganda and their Canon is in Prakrit or its literary form Pali. The Edicts of Asoka gave an impetus to the progress of the vernaculars.

**Literature.** The *Arthashastra* of Kautilya, a unique work in Sanskrit Literature, is the greatest production in the field of *Dandaniti*, summarising and superseding the previous works on the subject. It is in the best *Sutra* style, provided with a *Bhashya* or commentary by the author himself. The later *Dharma Sutras* were composed during this period. Later literary tradition makes Subandhu (different from the author of the famous romance *Vasavadatta*) the minister of Bindusara and credits him with the composition of a Sanskrit drama. Portions of the Jain and Buddhist Canon came into existence in the reigns of Chandragupta and Asoka respectively, the Pali *Kathavatthu* deserves special mention. The sermons of Asoka are as much literature as the *Upanishads*.

**Education.** The University of Taxila must have gained from the establishment of the Maurya Empire. Kautilya mentions the sciences as four (in contradistinction to the school of Usanas holding that the science of government is the only science) *Anvikshaki* or Philosophy, the three *Vedas*, *Varta* and *Dandaniti*. He outlines the education

of princes as follows the alphabet and arithmetic immediately after the first tonsure and after *upanayana*, the *Vedas*, philosophy economics and politics To this curriculum are added the military art and *Itihasa* the latter consisting of *Purana*, *Ituritta* (history), *Akhyayika* (story), *Udaharana* (illustration) *Dharmasastra* and *Arthasastra* (only a part of it coming under *Itihasa*) Thus Kautilya prescribes a comprehensive course of studies religious and secular, and makes philosophy, including Sankhya the leading science Jainism and Buddhism contributed much to popular education, and the publication of Asoka's edicts in the language of the masses must have tended in the same direction

**Philosophy.** Dr Jacobi places Jaimini, the author of the *Mimamsa Sūtras*, in the third century B C on the ground that he must have lived after Panini and before Patanjali Jaimini was the contemporary of Badarayana, who composed the *Brahma (Vedānta) Sūtras*, commented on by Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhva These two *Sūtras* attempt to systematise the Vedic religion But some scholars assign them to an earlier age, the fourth century B C, though the general tendency of specialists is to regard them as compositions of our next period Kautilya attaches supreme value to Philosophy and observes "*Antikṣaḥ* is most beneficial to the world, keeps the mind steady and firm in weal and woe alike, and bestows excellence of foresight, speech and action . Light to all kinds of knowledge' According to Megasthenes, the Brahmins prohibited Philosophy to their women The spread of Jainism must have contributed to the development of Vaisheshika thought though the *Sūtras* of this philosophical system were framed in a subsequent age

**Art** The identification of the Paikham and Patna statues with those of Susunaga kings, if proved by further research must modify our ideas of the origin of Indian art Art work which was mostly in wood before Asoka has completely perished, and we know the artistic excellence of the reign of Chandragupta only from Greek literary evidence and inferentially from the perfection achieved by sculpture in the period of Asoka Excavations at Pataliputra have brought to light the remains of a hall with many pillars, revealing Iranian influence

Of Asoka's numerous monuments only a few are extant. His palace and monasteries and most of his *stupas* (dome like structures of brick or stone chiefly to house the relics of the Buddha or some other saint) have disappeared. The only remaining *stupas* are at Sanchi (Central India).

**Pillars** Asoka's *lats* or pillars are made of fine single blocks of sandstone (hence called monoliths), quarried near Chunar, so well polished as to appear like metallic columns and forty to fifty feet in height. The ten of them on which inscriptions are found are at Delhi (originally at Topra, Panjab), and another at Meerut, U P), Allahabad, Lauriya Araraj, Lauriya Nandangarh, Rampurwa (these three in Bihar), Sanchi, Sarnath (near Benares), Rumminder and Nighva (both in the Nepalese Tarai). Their capitals or tops are crowned with animals like the lion, elephant and bull. The Sarnath capital with four lions "though by no means a masterpiece is the product of the most developed art of which the world was cognisant in the third century B.C.—the handiwork of one who had generations of artistic effort and experience behind him" (Sir John Marshall). \* The Sanchi lion capital is not much inferior to that of Sarnath. This achievement marks the height of Indian sculptural progress.

**Caves and Minor Arts** The caves of intractable gneiss presented to the Ajivikas by Asoka and Dasaratha are products of infinite patience and great skill, with their inside burnished like mirrors. Though the punch marked coins possess no artistic merit the work of jewellers and lapidaries or gem engravers exhibits high technical skill. The Rock Inscriptions (14 plus two Kalinga Edicts and two Minor Rock Edicts) are found at Shahbargariu and Mansehra (Peshawar and Hazara Districts, N W F P), Kalsi (Dehra Dun District U P), Bairat (Jaipur State, Rajputana)—No 1 is the Minor Rock Edict and No 2, on a detached piece of rock, now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, Sahasram or Sasaram (Shahabad District, Bihar), Rupnath (Jubbulpore District, C P), Junagarh or Girnar (Kathiawar), Sopara (Thana District, Bombay), Maski and Kopbal (the Nizam's State), Yerragudi (Kurnool District Madras), Siddapura, Jatinga Ramesvara and Brahmagiri.

(Chitaldrug District Mysore) Dhauli (Puri District Orissa) and Jaugada (formerly in Ganjam District Madras but now in Orissa) Though they are of inferior artistic value to the pillars the letters cut carefully, are beautiful

**Character of Maurya Art** Sir John Marshall praises the dignified massive simplicity, extraordinary precision and accuracy and spirited realism of Maurya art. Dr. Smith observes 'The skill of the stone-cutter may be said to have attained perfection and to have accomplished tasks which would perhaps be found beyond the powers of the 20th century' \*. The pillars had to be taken far away from the quarry and their fabrication conveyance and erection bear eloquent testimony to the skill and resource of the stone-cutters and engineers of the Maurya age †

**Foreign Influence** Sir John Marshall emphasises the striking contrast between the Sarnath capital and the Parkham statue regards them as the alpha and the omega of early Indian art and discerns in the former indubitable Iranian and Greek (Bactrian) influences. The Iranian features are the bell capitals with their animals and the highly polished shafts of the monoliths though the Maurya product is much more artistic than Iranian models. Greek influence is seen in the modelling of animals on the capitals and in some elements of decoration like acanthus leaves but the spirit subjects and details are pure Indian. There was much scope for such influence as the foreign relations of the Mauryas show. The preference shown to stone architecture and sculpture might be due to the Iranian contact similarly the idea of putting inscriptions on rocks and pillars. The expression 'Thus saith His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the King' corresponds to 'Thus saith Darius the King' though Asoka in contrast with Darius I expresses his ethical and religious ideas on stone. But some think that the Naksh-i Rostam inscription records the last solemn admonition of Darius to his countrymen with respect to their future conduct in policy, morals and religion. Besides the limited employment of the

\* Smith *Asoka* p. 136

† *Ibid* pp. 120-21

‡ C. H. I. I. p. 622

Kharoshthi script by Asoka, the Iranian word *nir* meaning writing is used. But this was not a general influence but only a local variation in a region which had once been under Iranian political control. The French art critic Le Bon, testifies to the substantial originality of Maurya art and says that the Hindus are remarkably capable of assimilating foreign artistic forms, which are transformed beyond recognition. This was exactly the artistic merit of the Athenians of the fifth century B.C., though they borrowed from various sources, their art is instinct with individuality and of supreme excellence.

Though there is no denying the reality of Iranian influence on Mauryan India and, to a much lesser extent, of Greek influence, a few scholars hold "diffusionist" views and regard

**Other alleged Iranian Influences** the Maurya Empire itself as the offspring of the Iranian and Macedonian contacts with India. Maurya roads and irrigation works are attributed to Iranian inspiration. Such practices as wearing long hair and the ceremonial washing of it, cropping the hair as a punishment, and keeping the sacred fire in a separate room, prevalent in the time of Chandragupta, are said to be Iranian. But these similarities might be better explained with reference to a common heritage than by the hypothesis of borrowing. We should not seek for a foreign origin unless and until we have examined the Indian side of the evidence and failed to find out an indigenous explanation. In some cases Indian antecedents are more elucidatory than the theory of extra Indian origin. We have seen how political integration developed slowly in this country from the Vedic age and noted that the work of Kautilya is more recapitulatory of older views than originaive. Therefore Indian indebtedness to Iran and particularly to Greece, must not be asserted without adequate positive proof. Still Dr D B Spooner advanced a startling theory in 1915 that the Maurya dynasty was of 'almost purely Persian type', that Chandragupta's original home was Persepolis, that the term Maurya should be derived from Merv, that Kautilya, the Buddha and the Nandas were also Iranians, and that, in short, there was 'a Zoroastrian period' of Indian History. He based his conclusions on the similarity of the remains of the Maurya palace, unearthed near Patna, to Iranian structures, on the Brahmanical hostility to



the Nandas and the Maurvas and to the Buddha, and on the suspicious Brahmanical orthodoxy of Kautilya. But in his ingenious and bold speculations he did not reckon with the irrefutable Indian origin of Buddhism as revealed by a comparative study of Brahmanical and Buddhist Literatures or with the fact that Kautilya was more a compiler and critic than an innovator in the field of the *Arthasastra* Literature. Anyhow, we must think twice before denying Iranian influence on Mauryan civilisation.

• **Causes of Mauryan Cultural Progress** Much of the credit for cultural progress during the Mauryan period should go to the first three emperors who created the necessary resources and utilised them for a great cause. The improvement in the material condition of the people in general must have made their outlook on life one of robust optimism. India's intercourse with Western Asia made the adaptation of foreign ideas possible. Above all the living faith of Asoka is to be regarded as the basic contributory factor to the cultural eminence attained in the third century B.C. and his moral earnestness did not verge on puritanism.

## SECTION IX SOUTH INDIA

The *Arthasastra* gives the place of honour among pearls to *Tamraparnika* and *Pandyakavataka* and mentions the cotton fabrics of Madura—clear references to the Pandya country and its valuable products. Among other southern regions referred to are Mahishmati, Aparanta and Kalinga. Megasthenes narrates legends about the Pandya country and its queen and describes its army of 500 elephants, 4,000 horse and 130,000 foot, alluding to its pearl fishery. We have considered the Mauryan invasion of South India referred to in the Sangam Literature. The inscriptions of Asoka throw light on political conditions and coupled with the Ceylonese Chronicles acquaint us with his Buddhist propaganda in cis-Vindhyan India. The conquest and administration of Kalinga and the southernmost limit of the Maurya Empire have been dealt with. As regards independent South India, Rock Edict II mentions the Cholas, the Pandyas, the Satyaputra and the Keralaputra as far as 'Tamraparni' as neighbouring powers obtaining the advantage of Asoka's 'healing arrangements'.

for men and animals. Rock Edict XIII refers to the spread of the *Dhamma* among the Cholas and the Pandyas as far as "Tāṁraparni." The greatest difficulty in interpretation relates to Satiyaputra. Numerous identifications of this region have been proposed: the region of Kanchi, the territory corresponding to the Coimbatore District, in which there is Satyamangalam, North Malabar, and South Kanara. It is best to take it as the region of the West Coast, north of Kerala (Tiavancore, Cochun and South Malabar). "Tamraparni" or Tambapanni is identified with the region watered by that river, but this region must have been included in the Pandya country. Therefore it is better to regard it as the equivalent of Taprobane the Greek name of Ceylon. The Satavahanas and the Chetras of Kalinga became independent in the course of the last quarter of the third century B.C., and then conflicts with each other and with the Sungas belong to the story of the next century. The political fortunes of the Tamil kingdoms are unknown till they came into prominence in the early centuries of the Christian era. The famous Tamil grammatical work, the *Tolkappiyam* may be assigned to the period under survey, it is said to exhibit the influence of *Andra Vyākaraṇa* (Indra's Grammar), a pre-Pāṇinian system of Sanskrit grammar.

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# CHAPTER V

## SECOND CENTURY B C TO<sup>o</sup> THIRD CENTURY A D

### SECTION I THE SINGAS AND THE KANVAS

**Date** According to the *Puranas* the Mauryas ruled for one hundred and thirty seven years and therefore their overthrow by Pushyamitra must have happened in  $325-187=188$  B C His reign period being thirty six years his final date is  $188-36=152$  B C Including him there were ten Singas reigning for one hundred and twelve years and therefore the dynasty must have come to an end in  $188-112=76$  B C The Kanvas who followed the Singas ruled for forty five years and consequently till  $76-45=31$  B C

**Pushyamitra Singa (c 188—c 152 B C)** The treacherous murder of Brihadratha Maurya was a ministerial revolution with the support of the army. Bana stigmatises Pushyamitra as an *anarya* (an ignoble person) but refers to the murdered sovereign's failure to keep his promise. The *Puranas* allude to the Commander in Chief's extirpation of Brihadratha. Singa is the tribal name and Bumbika the family name of Pushyamitra who is regarded as a priestly Brahman though normally the elevation of a Brahman to the position of imperial general is improbable in the second century B C and the *Puranas* do not support that assumption. Much scholarly speculation centres round his alleged Brahmanhood. The Singas were intimately connected with Vidisa, (near Ujjain) which was probably their ancestral home.

**Conquest of Berar** Kalidasa's *Malavikagnimitra* throws some light on the first three Singas. Agnimitra his father Pushyamitra's Viceroy of Vidisa owing to his misunderstandings with Yajnasena of Vidarbha invaded the latter territory, ousted its ruler from the throne and partitioned it between two claimants who became subordinate to the Singas. The drama alludes also to the victory of Vasumitra Agnimitra's son over the Greeks on the banks of the Sindhu preparatory to the performance of the *astamedha*

by Pushyamitra mentioned by the grammarian Patanjali. The Ayodhya Sanskrit inscription of Dhanadeva, the sixth son of Pushyamitra describes the latter as "the performer of two horse sacrifices. We do not know whether Patanjali's reference is to the first or second *asvamedha*.

**Defeated by Kharavela** The Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela of Kalinga mentions, with reference to his eighth regnal year, his sack of Gorathagiri and his attack on Rajagriha and the consequent withdrawal of the Yavana king Dinita or Demetrios to Mathura, in his tenth regnal year he invaded Bharatavarsha, in his twelfth year, he again invaded Magadha, stabled his elephants in the *Sugangiya* palace, subdued Bahasatimitra, king of Magadha and returned home with a Jain image which had been taken away by a Nanda king, and other spoils of war. As regards these epigraphical data, the chief point to be elucidated is the identity of Bahasati (Brihaspati) mitra. Dr K. P. Jayaswal identifies him with Pushyamitra Sunga, on inscriptional and numismatic evidences, and suggests the equation of Brihaspati with Pushya as the former is the lord of the Pushya *nakshatra* (star). To oppose this identification on the ground that Kharavela's adversary is referred to as the king of Magadha and associated with Rajagriha is to overlook the reference to the seizure of the *Sugangiya* palace at Pataliputra and to attach too much importance to archaic allusions. In Kalidasa's drama Pushyamitra remains a *Senapati* throughout his career, and this is no refutation of his position as emperor. The safety of Rajagriha might have led to his residence there in troublous times. Therefore Kharavela's activities in Northern India against Pushyamitra may be well founded. The latter's defeat probably happened during the period of the occupation of Pataliputra by the Greeks (175—168 B.C.). His second *asvamedha* may be dated after the Greek evacuation of the imperial city about 168 B.C.

**Conflict with the Greeks** The progress of the Yavanan Greeks as far as Pataliputra is sufficiently attested, though there is a difference of opinion regarding the Greek foe of Pushyamitra Demetrios or Menander. Dr Tarn, in the light of Greek evidence, attributes the conquest of India

to Demetrios and his two lieutenants Apollodotos and Menander. After seizing Taxila Demetrios left Menander there in order to lead the south-eastern march, conquered Sindh, entrusted the southern advance to Apollodotos and returned to Taxila. It was Menander who captured Sag(h)ala (Sialkot), Mathura, Saketa (in Oudh) and ultimately Pataliputra with the result that Pushyamitra's probable advance as far as Sagala must have been nullified. But the *Lugapurana* of the *Gargi Samhita* says: "The Yavanas furious in battle will not stay in the Middle Country: there will be without doubt mutual conflicts: out of their own circles will arise an awful and supremely lamentable strife." \* This is confirmed by Greek sources according to which the evacuation of Pataliputra was due to the troubles created by Eukratides. Menander acted under the instructions of his master Demetrios. Probably the Greek withdrawal about 168 B.C. was partly caused by the foreigners' difficulties in holding Pataliputra against hostile Indian powers and by the intervention of Kharavela in Northern Indian politics. Pushyamitra recovered a part of his lost ground as far as and including Oudh and must have regained his capital. Most probably Kalidasa's reference is to the second horse-sacrifice as Pushyamitra must have been sufficiently old to have a grandson fit to lead the sacrificial horse.

**Alleged Persecution of Buddhism** The tradition of the Buddhists represents Pushyamitra as a violent persecutor of their religion who destroyed numerous monasteries, killed many monks and went so far as to set a price on the head of every monk. The *Arja Manjusri Mulakalpa* calls him Gomishanda (gomi=bull) and the wicked and finds a place for him in hell. That he espoused the cause of Brahmanism is clear from his horse-sacrifices. It cannot be shown that he patronised Buddhism to any extent. There is no decisive evidence either that he aimed at uprooting Buddhism though he overthrew the Mauryas and pursued a stormy career. Still it is unhistorical to regard the story of his misdeeds as a figment of the Buddhist imagination.

**Extent of the Empire.** Pusyamitra held the central region of the Maurya Empire as far as the Narmada and a little further south (Vidarbha). If his authority had extended to the Panjab, he could not have held himself there for long against the Greek advance. We do not know whether he was an exact contemporary of Patanjali though the latter is generally assigned to about 150 B. C.

**Agnimitra and his Successors.** We have indicated the part Agnimitra played as his father's Viceroy. The next important ruler Bhaga, the ninth Sunga, reigned for thirty-two years, according to the *Puranas*. His fourteenth regnal year has become famous for the erection of a Garuda monolith at Besnagar (Gwalior State) dedicated to "Vasudeva, the god of gods, by Heliodoros, a worshipper of the Vishnu, the son of Dion and an inhabitant of Taxila who came as Greek ambassador from the Great King Antialcidas to King Kasiputra Bhagabhadra, the Saviour," with these details inscribed on it. The inscription concludes that "three immortal precepts when practised lead to heaven—self-restraint, charity and conscientiousness." This record proves the friendly relations between the Singas and the Indo-Greek ruler mentioned, the conversion of a Greek ambassador to Vaishnavism, and his acquaintance with the *Mahabharata*, from which the concluding portion of the inscription is a quotation. A few scholars identify the Bhagabhadra of this record with Odraka or Bhadraka, the fifth Sunga. The last Sunga was Devabhuti, a reprobate who was murdered by his Brahman minister, Vasudeva Kanva. There must have been obscure princes of the dynasty after Devabhuti as the *Puranas* speak of the destruction of the Kanvas and the remains of the Sunga power by the Andhras.

**Importance of the Sunga Period.** The Singas played a part not only in compassing the ruin of the Maurya dynasty, but also to some extent, in defending the Gangetic Valley from the encroachments of the Bactrian Greeks and subsequently entering into peaceful relations with them. They identified themselves with Brahmanism, revived the Vedic religion and the horse sacrifice and promoted the growth of Vaishnavism. Their contribution to art will be recorded in

the general survey of the age. Some scholars surmise that a few great works in Sanskrit must have been composed in the Sunga Kanva period which is consequently regarded by them as a literary epoch as well, in short a brilliant anticipation of the golden age of the Guptas. It must be said, however, that the Sunga revolution on the whole, was much less constructive than the Maurya revolution.

**Kanvas** The Kanvas were a Brahman dynasty called *Sunga bhritya*, according to the *Puranas*, the four members of which ruled over a part of the Sunga dominions for forty five years. The first king was the usurper Vasudeva, and the last Susarman, was ousted by the Andhras. The history of Magadha after the fall of the Kanvas is practically a blank until the emergence of the Gupta power.

## SECTION II. KHARAVĒLA OF KALINGA

**Date** (c 176—c 163 B C) On the assumption that the Hathigumpha inscription is dated in the year 165 of the Maurya era, it may be assigned to  $325 - 165 = 160$  B C, and Kharavela's accession to  $160 + 13$  (the reign period taken into account in the record) = 173 B C. But in the revised reading of that inscription, no such chronological datum is found. In his eighth regnal year, Kharavela invaded Northern India, and Demetrios withdrew to Mathura. On the ground that the date of the Greek abandonment of Pataliputra is 175 B C, Kharavela's eighth regnal year is equated with that date, and therefore he must have ascended the throne in  $175 + 8 = 183$  B C. But Dr Tarn gives 168 B C as the most satisfactory date for the Greek evacuation of Pataliputra,\* and we may place Kharavela's succession in  $168 + 8 = 176$  B C and his birth in  $176 + 24$  (his age at coronation) = 200 B C. We have, however, no data to determine his final date, though it is certain that he ruled for at least 13 years. Dr Buhler assigns the inscription, on palaeographical grounds to about 160 B C.

**The Hathigumpha Inscription** The Hathigumpha (the Elephant Cave) inscription is found at Udayagiri near Cuttack. Time has been unkind to it and so the readings in

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\* Tarn op cit p 133

some cases cannot be regarded as final. The record describes year by year the activities of Kharavela, warlike and peaceful, during the first thirteen years of his reign. It is a historical document of unique value, throwing full light on the ascendancy of Kalinga in the first half of the second century B.C. Like the Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudragupta, it is practically the only source of our knowledge of a great hero. It has been rightly called "the chiselled history" of Kharavela. It is in Prakrit, written in the Brahmi script.

**Contents** The prefatory portion mentions Kharavela's ancestor Mahameghavahana of the Cheta dynasty. During the period of his heir apparentcy from fifteen to twenty four years Kharavela studied correspondence, currency, finance and law, secular and religious. In his twenty fifth year he became king, and in his (1) first regnal year, he made extensive and costly improvements to the capital which pleased his subjects (2) He marched westwards and threatened the Mushikas, thus disregarding Satakarni (3) He gave entertainments of various kinds to the citizens (4) He conquered the Rashtrikas and the Bhojakas (Western India) (5) He extended to the capital a canal excavated in the year 103 of King Nanda (6 & 7) He performed the *Rajasuya*, remitted taxes, announced privileges to urban and rural corporations and became a father (8) He sacked Gorathagiri (Gaya District), attacked Rajagriha, and caused the retirement of Demetrios to Mathura (9) He distributed charity and built a palace called Mahavijaya or Great Victory (10) He raided Northern India (11) He destroyed a market town of the Ava king, and dismembered the powerful Tamil confederacy, which had been in existence for one hundred and thirteen years (12) He humbled Brihaspatimitra, took back the image of Kalinga Jina, carried away by King Nanda, obtained rich booty from Anga and Magadha, and received many costly presents from the Pandya king (13) He made donations to Jain monks and realised the distinction between body and soul. He summoned an assembly of ascetics from all places, erected four pillars on which were inscribed the seven fold *Angas* (Jain Canon) to be compiled the record concludes with a number of Kharavela's titles: the King of Peace, the King of Prosperity, the King of Monks, the King of Dharma,



the Respector of every Sect, the Repurer of all Temples, the Great Conqueror etc. This is in marked contrast with the admirable modesty of Asoka.

**Historical Value** This lengthy epigraph enlightens us on the parentage and education, the wars the public works, the religion and religious policy the government and the personal character of Kharavela though it tells us nothing about the territory annexed by him. He seems to have played the role of a knight errant. In spite of his frequent wars he calls himself King of Peace. We do not know if he came into conflict with the Satavahanas directly. Some scholars are inclined to be critical about his alleged victories especially over Pushyamitra. But, placed between two fires, Kharavela and Menander, Pushyamitra must have found his position difficult to maintain. Until and unless contradictory evidence is available we have to take Kharavela's words at their face value. Like Asoka he says that he respects every sect. He patronised Jainism, but did not forget the other religions. Kharavela's love of Jainism did not make him a Puritan, he was a great builder and a man of well-balanced tastes in short an accomplished prince, rapid in his military movements, generous, popular and persevering. Besides reflecting contemporary affairs the Hathugumpha inscription throws sidelights on the Nandas and the Tamil league. The recovery of Kharavela's history is a triumph of patient and laborious epigraphical scholarship.

### SECTION III THE GREEK CONQUEST

**Independence of Bactria** Parthia revolted against the Seleucids, and the Arsakidan dynasty, established in 249—8 B C, continued till its overthrow in A D 226—7 by the Sassanian line. Dr Tarn rejects the story of Bactrian revolt in 250 B C. Diodotos I married the sister of Seleukos II about 246 B C, and continued in a subordinate capacity till his death about 230 B C. Diodotos II followed an anti Seleucid policy, but was murdered by Euthydemos I who had married a Seleucid princess and who clashed with Antiochos III in 208 B C, concluded an alliance with him in 206 B C ensuring his own independence and expanded his kingdom up to his death about 189 B C. His son, Demetrios, extended

Bactria further, and it was he, not his father, who invaded India

**Demetrios.** In the light of his reconstruction of the history of this period, Dr Tarn feels justified in concluding that 'the story of Macedonia repeated itself, line upon line in the Farther East, Euthydemus was Philip II, Bactria was Macedonia, the derelict Maurya empire was the Persian empire, and Demetrios was a second Alexander'.\* The hypothesis of Demetrios deliberately following in the footsteps of Alexander the Great is based on the elephant scalp worn by both on their coins, the title of "the Invincible" common to them, and the Graeco Indian kingdom established by Demetrios—an equal partnership between the two peoples—in harmony with Alexander's ideal of Perso Greek equality and unification. Whatever may be the truth about the noble aim of Demetrios to translate Alexander's dream into practice, there is no doubt that his achievements in India were far greater than those of his prototype or of Darius I. He left behind him in India his capable lieutenant, Menander, to continue his task. We have seen the general course of the Greek invasion conducted by Demetrios and Menander. From Taxila two lines of advance were chalked out, one in the direction of Pataliputra under the latter and another southwards under the former, who achieved the conquest of Sindh. Apollodotos marched further south as far as Barigaza (Broch), and subsequently seized Madhyamika (Nagari near Chitor, Rajputana) and, most probably, Ujjain. The inclusion of Ujjain, Taxila and Pataliputra in the Indo Greek empire leads Dr Tarn to imagine the possibility that Demetrios a Seleucid on the distaff side, aimed at stepping into the shoes of Asoka, also a semi Seleucid, according to the story of Chandragupta's or Bindusara's marriage with a Syrian princess. Whatever might be his objective, it was not realised because he had to leave India to deal with the hostility of Eukratides. His empire included, besides his Indian possessions, Afghanistan, most of Baluchistan, Russian Turkistan and a part of Chinese Turkistan—an empire more extensive than that of Seleukos Nikator.

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\* Tarn *op cit*, p. 410.

**Menander** After the conquest of Bactria as the agent of Antiochos IV Eukratides invaded India about 165 B C and overthrew Apollodotos but before he could cross the Indus his progress was checked by Menander and an agreement was made between the two. Menander married Agathokleia the daughter of Demetrios and from about 160 to 150 B C was supreme in the Indo Greek territory from Gandhara to Mathura he also held the Indus Valley down to Sindh and further south up to Broach excluding Madhyamika and Ujjain his capital being Sagala. His administration was Greek only to a small extent—a Greek king a semi Greek army and Greek higher officials. A few cities were organised on the Greek model and the military colonies were not numerous. In other words his empire was more Indian than Greek in accordance with his master's ideal of racial partnership. The Pali *Milindapanha* or

Questions of Milinda (Menander) is proof positive of his adherence to Buddhism whatever his precise appreciation of it may be. This coins with the legend *dikaios* or *dharmika* (the Just) are rarities the wheel is found on his bronze coins. Dr Tarn questions the view that he was a Buddhist though it cannot be proved that he was not a Buddhist and emphasises the regular title Soter or Saviour and the Goddess Athena on his coins. He is too optimistic regarding the Alexandrian proclivities of Demetrios and too pessimistic about the Buddhist tendencies of Menander.

**Later Indo-Greeks** The Greek rule in India lasted for more than a century after the death of Menander. Heliodoros the successor of Eukratides in Bactria annexed Gandhara and Taxila between 145 and 141 B C. Menander was succeeded by Strato I a minor and his mother Agathokleia as Regent controlled the dominion between the Jhelum and Mathura the southern provinces Sindh and Kathiawar became gradually independent. Heliodoros was practically the last ruler of Bactria which was overwhelmed by nomads after 140 B C—not the Sakas but the Yueh chi according to Dr Tarn. His successors' authority was confined to the region between the Hindu Kush and the Jhelum the successors of Menander holding that from the Jhelum to Mathura. Thus there were two Greek royal houses in North Western India ruling over the territory to the west and east of the Jhelum respectively.

though this division was obscured to some extent by marriages between the two lines Antialkidas of the Besnagar inscription succeeded Heliokles, his date depends on the date of that record. His capital was Taxila. He was the last king of his line to retain possession of the whole of the western kingdom. In the eastern kingdom, Agathokleia and Strato I were followed by their successors who changed the capital from Sagala to Bucephala. The Sakas invaded India about 120 B.C. and occupied the territory from Sindh to Kathiawar. About 80 B.C., they moved up the Indus Valley under Maues and seized Taxila and Gandhara. About 90 B.C. Mathura had become independent, but was conquered by the Sakas about 60 B.C. Thirty years later, they put an end to the eastern kingdom of Hippostratos. The western kingdom under Hermaios and his queen Kalliope—it had become divided into three parts—Taxila, Pushkalavati and Kapisa—was overthrown by the Parthians about the same time, i.e., 30 B.C.

**Effects of Indo-Greek Rule** Some cities of the Greek type like Pushkalavati, Bucephala and Demetrios flourished, besides the Greek administrative organisation and the Greek language. The bilingual coinage was continued by the Sakas, the Parthians and the early Kushans. The use of the Seleucid era was widely imitated, and other eras were founded by the succeeding dynasties. Trade with the West obtained a stimulus. There were many mutual influences of a temporary character between the Greeks and the Hindus. But '(except for the Buddha statue) the history of India would have been essentially what it has been had Greeks never existed'\*. The ultimate failure of the Greeks in India was due to their incapacity for combination and to the substantial energy of the Indian states, coupled with the irruption of the barbarians.

#### SECTION IV THE SAKAS AND THE PAHLAVAS

**Sakas** The period between the destruction of Indo-Greek rule and the advent of the Kushans is complicated by the rule of other foreign princes whose nationality and chronology—and the identity of some of their names—are debated by

scholars and the difficulty is apparently solved to some extent by a few who regard them as Sakas or Scythians. The Indo-Parthians or Pahlavas seem to be Parthianised Sakas. The invasion of India by these foreign tribes was caused by tribal movements in Central Asia in the 2nd century B.C. associated with the name of the Yueh-chi, to which tribe the Kushans belonged. As the successors of the Indo-Greeks the Sakas imitated their coinage and their satrapal system of administration was Parthian with Greek features. Their characteristic title is *Rajaraja* or king of kings and their name is

**Northern  
Satraps**

attached to a famous era. The Satraps, Maues and his successors became independent in due course—*Liaka Kusulaka* and *Patika at Taxila* and

*Rajuvula* and *Sodasa* at Mathura jointly called the Northern Satraps to differentiate them from the Satraps of Maharashtra and Ujjain or Western Satraps. Azes I the successor of Maues was the founder of an era. The Satraps of Taxila were overthrown by the Pahlavas and of Mathura by the Kushans.

**Parthians**

The Indo-Parthians belonged to two dynasties founded by Vonones and Gondophernes respectively whose history is based on numismatic data. The latter ruled during 19-45 A.D. over Afghanistan and Taxila. His conversion to Christianity by St. Thomas is mentioned in a Christian story originating in the 3rd century A.D. according to which that saint became a martyr. Dr. Smith thinks that his martyrdom at Mylapore (Madras) is more probable. The successors of Gondophernes weakened by their mutual quarrels were superseded by the Kushans.

## SECTION V THE KUSHANS

**Chronology Character of the Problem** The problem of Kushan chronology is practically the question of the date of Kanishka because we have a series of dates from 1 to 99 of an era for him and his successors. Further there is the connected problem of the priority of the Kadphises group (Kadphises I and II) to the Kanishka group (Kanishka to Vasudeva); and as this point has been positively and decisively answered by archaeological evidence, we may reckon back the period of the two Kadphises from the initial date of Kanishka. This chronological problem is

related to the origin of the two leading eras—Vikrama and Saka. There is no doubt that Kanishka founded an era used by him and his successors. Dr Fleet and a few other scholars regard Kanishka as the inaugurator of the Vikrama era of 53–57 B C, whereas many ascribe to him the foundation of the Saka era (78 A D). Regarding the origin of these eras there are various views. The Vikrama Samvat is supposed to have been started by Azes I (successor of Maues), and the Saka era by Nahapana, Chashtana, Kadphises II or Gautami putra Satakarni. The Satavahanas may be excluded on the ground that they use their regnal years in their records. Nahapana and Chashtana were technically provincial governors; the royal origin of the eras in question should be preferred to their gubernatorial origin. Kadphises II's coins and inscriptions do not give a date which may be connected with any era. As the association of Kanishka with the Vikrama era is demonstrably untenable in the light of his posteriority to the Kadphises group of Kushans, we may regard him as the originator of the Saka era.

• **Four Chief Theories** Among the many theories of Kanishka's date it is sufficient if four of them are examined: first century B C, first century A D, second century A D,

1st  
Century  
B C

and third century A D. The first view is based on the use of Greek in Kanishka's coin legends, on the supposed priority of the Kanishka group to Kadphises I belonging to the first half of the

first century A D and on the statement of Hiuen Tsang that Kanishka lived four hundred years after the Buddha's death. But the posteriority of the Kanishka group to the Kadphises group is established by excavations at Taxila, and the first hypothesis is now quite dead. The second theory is founded on numismatic evidence. The coins of Kadphises II and Kanishka are found together in many places and exhibit similarities. If the Kanishka group had preceded the Kadphises group such a juxtaposition would be

1st  
Century  
A D

hard to explain and we should rather have found the coins of Vasudeva and Kadphises I together, and that is not the case. So Kanishka should have followed Kadphises II. Further the

head of Kadphises I put on his copper coins is similar to that

of the Roman Emperor Augustus (27 B C - A D 14) Tiberius (A D 14-37) or Claudius (A D 41-54) and Kadphises II's gold coins agree in weight with the *aurei* of the early Roman empire. So the two Kadphises are to be assigned to the first half of the first century A D and Kanishka who came after them to the second half of that century. Moreover, the priority of the Kadphises group is confirmed by the evidence of the spade. So Kanishka may be considered to be the founder of the Saka era of A D 78. But some scholars

• 2nd  
Century  
A D

assign him to the second century A D. Dr Sten Konow on the strength of Tibetan and Chinese documents and Sir John Marshall on archaeological evidence. The buildings at the

Chir Stupa (Taxila) are found in four different strata and each stratum is associated with the coins of the following kings: uppermost or 1st—Vasudeva 2nd—Kanishka and Huvishka 3rd—Kadphises I and II and 4th—Saka and Pahlava. The monuments associated with Kanishka are similar to those of Taxila belonging to the second century A D. So he must have lived in that century. Accepting this conclusion Dr Smith works out the Kushan chronology as follows—Starting with A D 40 for the accession of Kadphises I he is allowed a reign of thirty eight years because of his death at the age of more than 80 years and because it is likely that his successor founded the era of A D 78. Kadphises II is supposed to have ruled for thirty two years on account of his extensive conquests and his abundant coinage. Giving ten years to the nameless king of the numismatists Kanishka's accession is placed in  $40 + 38 + 32 + 10 =$  A D 120. But the foundation of an era by Kadphises II is not supported by any positive evidence. Since Kadphises I died very old the period assigned to his immediate successor may have to be reduced. The provision of an interval between Kadphises II and Kanishka is not necessary. Above all we have no reasons for believing that an era was inaugurated about A D 120. The fourth hypothesis placing Kanishka in the 3rd century A D and connecting him with the Traikutaka era of 248-9 is clearly untenable because Kanishka and his successors down to Vasudeva ruled for nearly one hundred years and to assign the former to about A D 250 would take the latter,

3rd Century  
A D

who held Mathura, to about A D 350 But the Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudragupta (about A D 350) informs us that India west of Mathura was possessed by a number of republican tribes A long interval should be allowed between Vasudeva and Samudragupta for the development of the political conditions portrayed in the latter's inscription Since the first and fourth theories are easily eliminated, the real conflict is between the second and third theories A. D 78 is to be preferred because of its marking the commencement of a great era Therefore, assigning the period

**1st Century A. D. most probable** before that date to Kadphises I and II, Kanishka may be placed in 78-120 (his last inscription is dated in the year 41), Huvishka in 120-138, and Vasudeva in A D 152-177, the gap of 14 years between 138 and 152 is difficult to explain convincingly

**Kadphises I** After the occupation of Bactria by the Yueh chi five chieftainships developed and continued to exist till Kujula Kadphises, or Kadphises I, founded a united kingdom, named after the Kushan section of the tribe to which he belonged He extended his dominions to the borders of India by annihilating the remnants of the Pahlava power The Roman influence on his coinage is patent He calls himself "the great king, the king of kings" He seems to have been a Buddhist He lived in the first half of the first century A D and died when he was over eighty years of age

**Kadphises II.** It was Wima Kadphises, or Kadphises II, who conquered India proper, and his coins are found as far east as Benares The provenance of his coins does not necessarily indicate the extent of his conquest He seems to have annexed the country as far as Mathura He assumed imperial titles like "the lord of the whole world" and his bilingual (Greek and Indian) gold and copper coins show that he worshipped Siva

**Kanishka (c A. D. 78—c 120)** Kanishka was the most warlike and ablest of the Kushans He extended his Indian heritage by conquering Northern India as far as Pataliputra and Bodhi Gaya and Malwa and Sindh He is said to have abducted Asvaghosa, the great Buddhist author, from Pataliputra Kashmir was included in his empire as his monuments there show, and he founded Kanishkapura His coins and inscriptions exist

**Extent of the Kushan Empire**



from Peshawar to Benares and Gorakhpur (U P) From his capital Purushapura or Peshawar, he governed his empire with the assistance of Kshatrapas and Mahakshatrapas Outside India he added to his ancestral possessions In A D 87 he styled himself Devaputra and challenged the Chinese emperor His first expedition against China failed, and he was defeated by Pan chao But ultimately he succeeded in gaining Kashgar Yarkand and Khotan from China consequent on his defeating Pan yang the son of Pan chao He is said to have triumphed over the Parthian king as well He ended his life in a distant northern expedition It appears that he assumed the title of Kaiser or Caesar His imperial success is further reflected in his foundation of an era most probably the Saka era

**Kanishka as a Buddhist** Though the date of Kanishka's conversion to Buddhism is not known, there is no doubt about the occurrence itself It seems that he embraced that religion quite early in his reign. Inasmuch as the Buddhist story mostly repeats the details connected with Asoka, there is no knowing the real attachment of Kanishka to his new faith Only a few of his coins exhibit the image of the Buddha, whereas his other coins mention Greek Zoroastrian and Hindu gods and consequently it is thought that the great Kushan emperor must have been an eclectic in religion But this deduction from the numismatic data is not necessary as we may suppose that the religions indicated by the coins were those of his heterogeneous subjects Still it must be admitted that he never imbibed the pacific teaching of Buddhism as his uninterrupted martial career suggests Whatever may be the inwardness of his spiritual rebirth he showed the proverbial zeal of a convert and actively espoused the cause of his adopted faith, Mahayanism

**Mahayanism** In the age of Kanishka a new form of Buddhism was coming into vogue different in many respects from the religion taught by the Buddha and propagated by Asoka

**Character** called respectively the Mahayana (the Great Path) and the Hinayana (the Little Path), by the followers of the former school The chief differences between the two systems may be summed up as follows The Buddha

had emphasised that *nirvana* was a practical goal to be attained by self effort, there was no use of seeking the help of gods or of men in one's pursuit of salvation. In other words, only those who had sowed could reap. By the first century A D this simple and austere doctrine had become so transformed that the Buddha and other deceased saints were regarded as capable of helping men in their spiritual lives. In short, transfer of merit was recognised as possible and necessary. Further, the difficulty of attaining the goal of *nirvana* was stressed. The *Saddharmapundarika* (the Lotus of the True Law) says that innumerable good lives will make men Bodhisattvas and Buddhas and *nirvana* will be attained in the end. In other words *nirvana* became a distant objective. Prayer and worship became indispensable to spiritual progress. The Buddhist gods represented by their images were to be propitiated by worship with flowers, perfumes, clothes, lamps, etc. Charity and self sacrifice and devotion and active morality obtained prominent emphasis. Thus the old monastic system was invested with all the essentials of a living and popular religion. The old reverence for the Buddha developed in due course into his worship.

**Origin** Though the introduction of the Buddha image was inspired by the Greek contact with India and though for effective propaganda in foreign countries some fundamental change in Original Buddhism was necessary, the development of Mahayana on the doctrinal side was mostly on indigenous lines. The various Hinayana schools were discussing and disagreeing for a long time. The *Pitakas* prepared the way for the theory of transfer of merit. The old doctrine of steps to sanctity was now developed into the ideal of distant *nirvana*. Further, the new movements within Brahmanism, Sramanism and Vaishnavism, influenced the growth of Mahayana, which is indebted to the *Bhagavad Gita*.

**Value** Some would regard the change from Hinayana to Mahayana as one for the worse. In certain respects this charge is well founded. Neo Buddhism indulged in fantastic heavens and hells and increased popular superstition, it became popular at a heavy price and by the sacrifice of some of the basic doctrines of the Buddha. But at the same time,

it ministered to the needs of a large number of people who could not follow the rigorous old system. The two *yanas* should be regarded as mutually supplementary though in practice they pursued their careers separately.

**Kanishka's Patronage of Buddhism** The fourth Buddhist Council unnoticed in the Ceylonese Chronicles, was summoned by Kanishka probably about A D 100 in the Kundalavana monastery near Srinagari (Kashmir) in order to *fix the Canon*. Gandhara and the Panjab are mentioned in other accounts as the venue of the Council. About 500 members including Vasumitra and Asvaghosha participated in the deliberations and prepared the *Mahavibhasha* or the Great Commentary, on the *Tripitaka*, which was later inscribed on copper plates, so far not discovered. Probably missionary propaganda in Central Asia and China was organised. Buddhist art and literature were patronised by Kanishka, the leading authors being Asvaghosha, Nagarjuna and Charaka in literature philosophy and medicine respectively. Though purely indigenous art flourished at Mathura and Sarnath and though the headless statue of Kanishka, discovered near Mathura, does not exhibit any trace of Greek influence, North Western India was dominated by the Graeco-Buddhist school of Gandhara which produced many statues of the Buddha. Kanishka's *stupa* at Peshawar, enshrining the relics of the Buddha was built by Agesiلاس a Greek. The art of Gandhara is a blend of Graeco-Roman and Indian arts, scholars disagreeing about its character and value. Kanishka's bilingual coinage in spite of its many Asiatic features, continued the Roman technique adopted by his predecessors. Though Buddhist literature brackets Kanishka and Asoka as the great benefactors of Buddhism, there is no real comparison between the two. As Buddhists they were poles asunder. Superficially both were converts who co-operated with the Church by interesting themselves in her matters like the convocation of a council of theologians, the building of religious edifices and the adoption of measures for proselytism. Even as a patron of Buddhism, Kanishka cannot stand by the side of Asoka, at any rate, our knowledge of the latter is much more extensive and definite. No doubt Mahayanism found its

leading patron in Kanishka, who may be regarded as the *Constantine of Buddhism* rather than as its second Asoka

**Glory of his Epoch** The reign of Kanishka saw the Kushan Empire reaching its greatest extent and highest prosperity. Mahayanism was consolidated and prepared for its gigantic achievements in Asia. Jainism flourished at Mathura. The intimacy of the Kushan relations with the Roman Empire, whose frontier had been steadily extended eastwards, is reflected in the commerce and culture of the period. Overland trade connections existed with China as well. The cultural progress of the age is decisive proof of the rapid Indianisation of the foreigners, who showed no hostility to the religion and civilisation of the conquered.

**Successors of Kanishka** The inscriptional dates of Kanishka and his successors are as follows. Kanishka, 1—23, Vasishka, 24—28, Huvishka, 28—60, Kanishka, 41, and Vasudeva, 74—99. Therefore some suppose that Kanishka reigned only for twenty three years and was succeeded by Vasishka. But, identifying Kanishka of the Ara inscription

**Huvishka**  
(120—138)

of forty one with the great Kanishka the latter may be regarded as ruling continuously for more than forty years. Therefore Huvishka

must have succeeded him directly. He held his father's dominions intact, though the ascendancy of Rudradaman I in Malwa and Sindh argues the emancipation of that region from Kushan imperial control. Like Kanishka, he was a Buddhist and patron of Buddhism, and his coins exhibit the images of a number of deities, including Roma, like those of his father. He built a Buddhist monastery at Mathura and a city named Huvishkapura in Kashmir. Under Vasudeva the

**Vasudeva**  
(152—177)  
and Decline  
of the  
Kushan  
Empire

Kushan empire was much reduced in extent. Though his coins are found in the U P, the Panjab and Northern Sindh, his inscriptions are confined to Mathura. Hence the gap of 14 years between the last known date of Huvishka and the initial date of Vasudeva may be regarded as reflecting the troubles of the empire. Vasudeva's

name is indicative of his Hinduisation, and his coins give prominence to Siva and his bull, Nandi. Later literary

tradition regards him as a patron of letters. After him petty Kushan princes reigned in North Western India, occasionally becoming locally powerful down to the end of the 9th century. It is not easy to account for the decline of the Kushans. Dr. Smith emphasises the plague of 167 A.D. which was fatal to the West and could not but have affected their empire. The Persian characteristics of their coinage may suggest Sassanian aggression against the successors of Vasudeva, and according to the *Puranas* foreign invasions were numerous. The rapid Hinduisation of the Kushans might have weakened them in their conflicts with the trans-Indus powers. The history of Northern India in the 3rd century A.D. is exceedingly obscure, and only now and then and in some parts of it is a ray of light available to us.

## SECTION VI THE WESTERN SATRAPS

**Origin** That the Western Satraps were foreigners is clearly indicated by the employment of the Kharoshthi script on their early coins and by the very term *Kshatrapa* (or *Satrap*), a Sanskritised form of a Persian word 'Khsathrapavan' meaning protector of the land. Inscriptions describe them as Sakas and Pahlavas and Ptolemy's Indo-Scythia is almost identical with the kingdom of Rudradaman I. There were two dynasties of Western Satraps—the lines of Bhumaka and Chashtana. Some regard Bhumaka and Nahapana as Pahlavas and Chashtana and Rudradaman as Sakas. Though the name of Nahapana is Parthian and that of Ysamotika, father of Chashtana Saka, the suffix *daman* in the names of Rudradaman and his successors may well be identical with the *dama* of the Persian word "*Spalagadama*". Moreover Ushavadata, the son-in-law of Nahapana, was a Saka. Bhumaka and Nahapana are called *Kshaharatas* or *Kshaharatas*, a name not different from 'Karatai', a Saka tribe. Some say that Ysamotika and Bhumaka are one and the same because the Saka word *Ysama* = *Bhu* = earth. Another argument advanced is that in Indian literature the Pahlavas are described as a people with whiskers and that Nahapana is without whiskers on his coins. Therefore he was a Saka along with the Kshaharatas of Taxila and Mathura, some of whom had Pahlava names like Liaka, Patika and Ghatika.

It appears that in India the two nationalities, Saka and Pahlava, became so mixed up as to obscure their origin.

**Nahapana.** The Saka invasion of India towards the close of the 2nd century B C gradually spread to the Maratha country and eclipsed the power of the Satavahanas in the first century A D. In the time of Bhumaka and Nahapana, the Western Satraps struck their own coins, perhaps indicative of their independent position. It was under the latter that they became most powerful. His coins and the inscriptions of his son in law, Ushavadata, show that his dominions extended from Poona to Ajmer, including Kathiawar and Malwa. The Nasik inscriptions of Ushavadata enumerate his charities to Brahmans and his gift of a cave to monks with a sum of money deposited in guilds and bearing interest. Nahapana is mentioned as a Kshatrapa and a Mahakshatrapa, and the years found in the Nasik and Junnar inscriptions range from 41 to 46. His capital was probably Nasik, though some would regard him as ruling from Junnar (Poona District) Minnagara (Mandasor) or Broach. His power came to a sudden collapse by his crushing defeat at the hands of Gautamiputra Satakarni, the greatest of the Satavahanas, who restruck the former's coins as a mark of his triumph.

**Date.** On the assumption that the years mentioned above are Saka years, Nahapana is to be assigned to the period  $78+41=119$  to  $78+46=124$  A D. But this dating has been called in question on the ground that the Nahapana-Gautamiputra synchronism is untenable in the light of numismatic and scriptal considerations. Though Gautamiputra restruck 9,270 out of 13,250 coins of Nahapana found in the Nasik District, the portraits on them are so different that all of them could not be those of Nahapana. Therefore some descendant of the latter must have been defeated by that great Satavahana. The script of the Nasik inscriptions and that of Rudradaman I's Girnar *prasasti* or eulogy (about A.D. 150) indicate a minimum interval of 100 years between them. In other words, Nahapana must have lived before  $150-100=50$  A D. But these objections are too vague to go against the natural supposition that Nahapana as a technically subordinate ruler would have used an imperial era *i.e.*, the Saka era,

founded by Kanishka and that the restriking of his coins by Gautamiputra would make them contemporaries.

**Chashtana** Not much is known about Chashtana, the founder of the second line of Western Satraps. He started as the Kushan Satrap of Malwa with Ujjain as his capital, but Nahapana's northward move must have affected his position adversely in the decade following Kanishka's death. It is practically certain that the dates in the records of his dynasty refer to the Saka era. Therefore his year 52 may be equated with  $78 + 52 = 130$  A.D. he cannot be regarded as the founder of that era. As that year is common to him and his grandson Rudradaman, his son Jayadaman seems to have died too early to succeed his father. An Andhau (Cutch) inscription of the same year, limiting Chashtana's dominions to that region perhaps reflects the effects on his position of the imperialism of Nahapana, followed by that of Gautamiputra Satakarni. Soon the tables were turned against the Satavahanas by Rudradaman, the greatest member of the Chashtana dynasty.

**Rudradaman I (c. A.D. 130—150)** The famous Girnar *prasasti* of Mahakshatrapa Rudradaman is the first great inscription in Classical Sanskrit. It was composed after the reconstruction of the dam to Lake Sudarsana washed away by floods caused by a terrific storm, on the 16th November, 150. The history of the lake is briefly sketched in the record, its construction by the Vaisya Pushyagupta, the provincial governor of Chandragupta Maurya, the provision in a royal manner of irrigation canals by the Yavana Tushaspha (probably an Iranian, as Kershasp is a current name among the Parsis today\*) on behalf of Asoka Maurya, the beauty and solidity of the embankments with well provided conduits and drains, in short its excellent condition before the storm justifying its appellation Sudarsana or Beautiful, the storm is graphically described, and its devastating effects made the lake Durdarsana or Ugly after the repairs by Rudradaman effected in a short time and at great cost with a view to making the

History of  
Lake Sudar  
sana

dam more than trebly strong, the lake became Sudaisanītara or More Beautiful

**Character and Accomplishments of Rudradaman** The epigraphical account of Rudradaman's character and accomplishments seems to be conventional though a few scholars would take it without a grain of salt. It is said that he was elected king by his subjects, he never slew men except in battle, his realm was not troubled by robbers snakes or diseases, he was famous for his knowledge of grammar, politics music and logic and for his military skill, his compositions in prose and verse were clear, agreeable sweet, charming and beautiful, his body was strong, vigorous and handsome, he acquired the title of Mahakshatrapa by self effort, he never oppressed his subjects with taxes, forced labour, or *pranaya* ('benevolences' or forced loans). This part of the record, though of limited historical value, throws light on the ideals of the age, administrative and literary, and shows clearly how foreigners became rapidly Hinduised.

**Historical Value of the Record** The most valuable portion of the record relates to the extent of Rudradaman's empire to his conquest of the Yaudheyas and Satakarni, the latter twice, to the opposition of his ministers to the expenditure in connection with the improvement of Lake Sudarsana, and to the execution of the repairs by Amatya Suvisakha (perhaps identical with the Iranian Siwaksha\*) a Pahlava and the popular Governor of Kathiawar. Two kinds of ministers are mentioned *matishachiva* (counsellors) and *karmasachiva* (executive officers). When they disapproved of the costly repairs to the lake on the ground that the breach was too wide, Rudradaman provided the necessary funds from his own purse in order to remove the despair of his subjects.

**Conflict with the Satavahanas** Rudradaman claims to have become famous because he did not "extirpate Satakarni on account of his "non remote relationship" with him though the latter had been defeated in two cleanly fought battles. Who was this Satakarni? The answer to this question depends on the chronology of the Satavahanas regarding which disagreement seems to be the rule. Therefore

\* Commissariat, op cit p. xxv



various identifications of the defeated Satakarni ranging from Gautamiputra to Yajna Satakarni, have been proposed. According to the chronology adopted here, Gautamiputra ceased to reign about 130 A D, and his successor Vasishtiputra Pulumayi ruled from that date to about A D 158. Therefore the latter must have received the double blow of Rudradaman. The view that he was the son in law of the Mahakshatrapa is contradicted by the expression 'non remote relationship'. A Kanheri cave inscription refers to the Queen of Vasishtiputra Satakarni as the daughter of Rudradaman the Mahakshatrapa. Therefore the son in law in question was probably the brother of Pulumayi.

**Extent of the Empire** The extent of Rudradaman's empire is clear from the enumeration of its political divisions in the record itself. Malwa, Kathiawar, Marwar, Cutch, Sindh, North Konkan, etc. Of these the first two and the last had belonged to Gautamiputra Satakarni. Rudradaman's generosity to the defeated Satavahana is confirmed by the latter's possession of Nasik and other regions of the Satavahana dominions further south.

**Successors of Rudradaman I** The Chashtana dynasty consisted of twenty princes who actually ruled. Inscriptions and coins give us full genealogical and chronological details. The eighteen successors of Rudradaman I had the title of Kshatrapa or Mahakshatrapa. There was a usurpation by Isvaradatta Abhira during 236—38 A D. From 295 to 348 there were no Mahakshatrapas. About 250 the kingdom was partitioned, and the coinage of the dynasty deteriorated. During the first half of the fourth century the Sassanian rulers of Persia eclipsed by their Indian conquests the power of the Western Satraps. When their hold over India was relaxed there was a revival of the latter about 348, signalled by the resumption of the title Mahakshatrapa, but Samudragupta exerted his influence on them. The last prince Rudrasimha III ascended the throne in 388. Bana describes him as a *parakalatrikamuka* or lady killer, who was deprived of his life by Chandragupta (II) disguised as a woman. The *Devichandraguptam* of Visakhadatta says that the Scythian king wanted that Dhruvadevi, the queen of Ramagupta, the brother of Chandragupta II, should be sent to him. In this emergency

Chandragupta dressed like a lady, went to the Scythian ruler and meted out to him the punishment he richly deserved. When Dhruvadevi became a widow subsequently, Chandragupta made her his queen, and there is also a tradition that he killed his brother. The date of the Gupta annexation of Western India may be about 395, *i.e.*, before the Udayagiri (in Malwa) inscription (A D 401) of Chandragupta II.

## SECTION VII THE SATAVAHANAS

**Chronology.** The *Puranas* give a list of Andhra kings and their reign periods. Excluding minor discrepancies, about thirty kings are mentioned as ruling for about four hundred and fifty years by the *Matsya Purana*. Leaving out inconsistencies, the *Vayu Purana* may be taken as giving three hundred years for about nineteen princes. This major difference between the two *Puranas* is reconciled by some scholars on the assumption that in one case we have a consolidated list of all the kings and in the other a list of rulers of the main branch of the Andhras. The difference between 450 and 300 = 150 years agrees roughly with the total duration of the rule of the Sungas and the Kanvas— $112 + 45 = 157$  years. On the basis of the contemporaneity of the Sungas, the Kanvas and the Andhras, it may be thought that one hundred and fifty is to be omitted from four hundred and fifty and the remaining three hundred years regarded as the duration of the Andhra regime. Reckoning from 188 B C, the period of three hundred years ends in  $300 - 188 =$  A D 112. If the Andhras began to rule earlier than 188 B C, they should have ceased to rule sooner than A D 112, and as the Andhras from Gautami putra (No 23) ruled for more than one hundred years, that great sovereign will have to be placed about  $112 - 100 =$  A D 12. The impossibility of such an early date for him excludes the possibility of the Andhras ruling only for three hundred years. But a few scholars who accept this period inconsistently make the end of Sunga sovereignty synchronous with the commencement of Andhra rule, on the ground that the *Puranas* say that the first Andhra destroyed the Sungas and the Kanvas, and that therefore only these two dynasties were contemporary; they would calculate the Andhra period from

188-112 B C = 76 B C to A D 300-76 = A D 224 Though the later Andhra chronology thus becomes satisfactory, its starting point in the first century B C cannot be accepted as the Nasik and Nanaghat inscriptions of the early Satavahanas belong to the beginning of the second century B C on scriptal grounds. Therefore the Andhras must have ruled for about four hundred and fifty, not for three hundred years only.

**Commencement of Andhra rule** The starting point of the Satavahana chronology is to be arrived at on the basis of the synchronism of Gautamiputra with Nahapana. The Nasik inscription of Gautami Balasri the mother of Gautamiputra, mentions his extermination of the Khaharata family and his restoration of the glory of the Satavahanas. The Jogaltembhi (Nasik District Bombay) coins of Nahapana were restruck by Gautamiputra, and therefore the latter defeated the former. The inscriptions of Gautamiputra at Nasik and Karle show that that victory was won in his eighteenth regnal year. We have seen that Nahapana's final date so far known is A D 124. Therefore his conqueror's initial date =  $124 - 18 =$  A D 106, and as he ruled for twenty-four years, according to inscriptional evidence, his final date =  $106 + 24 =$  A D 130. The objections to the Gautamiputra Nahapana synchronism have already been disposed of. We have also rejected the possibility of Gautamiputra's foundation of the Saka era of A D 78. According to the *Matsya Purana*, the interval between Simuka (No 1) and Gautamiputra (No 23) is three hundred and forty one years, and between kings 23 and 30, about one hundred and eleven years. The reign periods given by that *Purana*, slightly corrected by inscriptions, and the chronology founded on them are as follows.

S No	NAME OF KING	REIGN PERIOD	DATE B C
1	Simuka (Sisuka)	23	235—212
2	Krishna	10	212—202
3	Satakarni	10	202—192
4	Purnotsanga	18	192—174
5	Skandastambhi	18	174—156
6	Satakarni	56	156—100
7	Lambodara	18	100— 82

S No	NAME OF KING	REIGN PERIOD	DATE B C
8	Apilaka	12	82— 70
9	Meghasvati	18	70— 52
10	Svati	18	52— 34
11	Skandasvati	7	34— 27
12	Mrigendra Svatikarna	3	27— 24
13	Kuntala Svatikarna	8	24— 16
14	Svatikarna	1	16— 15
15	Pulumayi	36	A D 15— 21
16	Arishtakarna	25	21— 46
17	Hala	5	46— 51
18	Mantalaka	5	51— 56
19	Purikasena	21	56— 77
20	Sundara Satakarni	1	77— 78
21	Chakora Satakarni	$\frac{1}{2}$	78
22	Siva Svati	28	78—106
23	Gautamiputra	21 (24)	106—130
24	Pulumayi	28	130—158
25	Sivasri Pulumayi	7	158—165
26	Sivashanda Satakarni	3	165—168
27	Yajnasri Satakarni	29	168—197
28	Vijaya	6	197—203
29	Chandasri Satakarni	10	203—213
30	Pulumayi	7	213—220

To the Puranic reign periods three years have been added to the reign of No 23 in the light of his inscriptions. The initial date of the dynasty, 235 B C, falls within the last years of Asoka, and consequently some would reckon from 232 B C, the probable date of Asoka's death. The contemporary of Kharavela of Kalinga would be No 5, instead of No 3, and the reference in the Hathigumpha inscription may be regarded as to a Satakarni or Satavahana ruler in general. Corrections may be made in the above tentative chronology in the light of well ascertained data.

**The First Empire.** The names *Satakarna* (with one hundred ears) and *Satavahana* (bearing the *Sata* emblem) may be tribal names. Some would identify the tribe with the Satiyaputras of Asoka's inscriptions. The name Andhra may

have become attached to the Satavahanas owing to their conquest of the Andhradesa in later times. The original home of the Satavahanas seems to have been the Bellary District though some would associate them with Northern India. Their claim to Brahmanhood is accepted by a few scholars and suspected or rejected by others. Their expansion westwards from the east coast is now generally discredited. The first ruler

**Simuka** Simuka could not have overthrown either the Sungas or the Kanvas. He must have emancipated himself from the Maurya imperial control a little before or after the death of Asoka. Though he is said to have reigned for twenty three years his achievements are not known. Some credit for the territorial growth during the next two reigns should go to him. His successor was his brother

**Krishna and Satakarni** Krishna. The latter and his nephew Satakarni who ruled for ten years each continued the work of Simuka and established an empire embracing the Godavari Valley up to Nasik and including the Konkan. The Nanaghat (near Poona) inscription mentions the statues of Simuka, Krishna and Satakarni and of Queen Naganika her father, etc. It seems that the Satavahana conquest of the Maratha country was consolidated by Satakarni's marriage with Naganika a Maratha lady. He is said to have performed two horse sacrifices, indicative of his imperial position. Paithan (Aurangabad District, the Nizam's State) on the Godavari was his capital. The successors of Satakarni (No 3) must have been responsible for the Satavahana conflict with the Sungas reflected in the *Malavikagnimitra* of Kalidasa. Their failure was subsequently retrieved

**Conquest of Malwa and Pataliputra** by the conquest of Malwa, under perhaps Satakarni (No 6). His successors must have destroyed the Kanvas and what remained of the Sunga power, seized Pataliputra, and held it for some time. The story of this achievement is obscure, though it is clear that in the triangular contest for Malwa among the Greeks, the Sungas and the Andhras, the last power must

**Kuntala Satakarni** have been ultimately successful. No 13<sup>14</sup> apparently the Kuntala Satakarni mentioned in the *Kama Sutra* of Vatsyayana as having caused the death of his queen by a blow (*kartari*) on the head.

delivered not out of malice but inadvertently in amorous play  
**Hala** • Hala (No 17) is famous as the author of *Sattasa*  
*(Saptasati)*, 700 stanzas in Prakrit on erotics  
 The Saka conquest of Malwa and Maharashtra caused the  
 withdrawal of the Satavahanas to the neighbourhood of their  
 ancestral home, and after a long interval their fortunes were  
 re-established by Gautamiputra Satakarni

**The Second Empire.** Gautamiputra Satakarni was  
 the greatest of the Satavahanas, and his splendid achievement  
 is enshrined in the Nasik *prasasti* of his mother, Gautami  
 Balasi, published in the nineteenth regnal year  
 (A D 149) of her grandson, Pulumayi. Omitting  
 the conventional and monotonous parts of the  
 eulogy, the noteworthy points are the following  
 She refers to herself as "the mother of a  
 Maharaja and grandmother of a Maharaja," and describes  
 Gautamiputra as "the destroyer of Sakas, Yavanas and  
 Pahlavas, the expurgator of the Kshatriya family, the restorer  
 of the glory of the Satavahana family, the elevator of his  
 family to high fortune, the unique Brahmana who crushed the  
 pride and conceit of the Kshatriyas" The extent of his  
 empire is indicated in the record Maharashtra, North  
 Konkan, Berar, Gujarat, Kathiawar, Malwa, etc. It is  
 significant that the Andhradesa is not mentioned. Thus his  
 decisive victory over Nahapana is indirectly elucidated. One  
 of his inscriptions records his gift of a piece of land which had  
 belonged to Ushavadata

We saw the double defeat of Pulumayi by Rudradaman I  
 but he could not be regarded as the latter's son-in-law, seeing  
 that the Girnari eulogy speaks of the defeats of a "non remote"  
 relation of the Mahakshatrapa. He thus lost a part of his  
 father's empire—Malwa, Kathiwar and North  
 Konkan. But he extended his dominions east  
 wards, and his coins indicate his possession of  
 the coastal territory between the Godavari and the Krishna.  
 Though his last regnal year mentioned in his inscriptions is  
 24, the Puranic figure 28 may be accepted

Passing over the reigns of numbers 25 and 26 lasting together for ten years we come to the last great Satakarni

**Yajna Satakarni** c 168—c 197 His puranic reign period of twenty nine years is confirmed by inscriptions mentioning his twenty seventh regnal year His epigraphical records are found not only in Maharashtra but also in North Konkan and the Krishna District and his coins in these regions as well as in Gujarat and Kathiawar His ship coins probably suggest his naval power It is clear that he reconquered from the Western Satraps some of the territories seized by Rudradaman I There is no manner of doubt regarding his control over the Andhradesa The last three rulers (28—30) were political nonentities and during their period of nearly 25 years the Satavahana empire was partitioned among themselves by its powerful feudatories the Abhiras and the Traikutakas in Maharashtra the Ikshvakus the Brihatphalayanakas and the Salankayanas in the Andhra country and the Pallavas in the original home of the Satavahanas

## SECTION VIII THE IKSHVAKUS (c 250—c 300 AD)

Our knowledge of the Ikshvakus is derived from their inscriptions at Jaggayyapeta (Krishna District) and Nagarjunikonda (Guntur District) We do not know if

**Santamula I** they were connected with the rulers of Ayodhya of the same name About AD 250 they ceased to be feudatories to the Satavahanas The first king Santamula performed many Vedic sacrifices symptomatic

**Virapurushadatta** of his independent political status He was a worshipper of Shanka His son and successor was Virapurushadatta Of his five queens Rudradhva seems to belong to the Chashtana line of Western Satraps and his daughter was married to a ruler of Binavasi Inscriptions indicate that he reigned

**Santamula II** at least for twenty years and his son Santamula II for eleven years The Ikshvaku dynasty consisting of three members may be allowed fifty years It was superseded by the Brihatphalayanakas and the Pallavas early in the fourth century AD Though Santamula I was devoted to Brahmanism his son and grandson

were Buddhists who made Nagarjunikonda a famous centre of Buddhism. The inscriptions of Virapurusha datta begin with obeisance to the Buddha. Prosperity of Buddhism. Stupas, monasteries and pillars were erected by the members of the royal family and private citizens with a view to the attainment of the bliss of nirvana. Accommodation was provided for monks and nuns of Ceylon and other countries. The prosperity of Buddhism in the Ikshvaku kingdom was due to the commercial importance of the locality in which Nagarjunikonda is situated, to the wealth of the merchants engaged in foreign trade, and to royal patronage. But this state of things was not of long duration as the Ikshvakus were succeeded by dynasties devoted to the orthodox religion.

## SECTION IX THE CHOLA CHERA PANDYA HEGEMONY

**Chronology of the Sangam Literature** The term Sangam Literature is applied to early Tamil works like the *Kural*, the twin epics *Silappadikaram* and *Manimekalai*, and particularly to the anthologies or poetical selections dealing with war and love like the *Purananuru*, the *Ahananuru*, the *Narri-na* and the *Kurunolai* traditionally ascribed to the third Sangam or Academy of Madura. The age of these compositions, called the Augustan age of Tamil Literature, is a much debated basic question of early Tamil history. The three main views on this problem ascribe their production to different periods: seventh and eighth centuries A.D., fifth century A.D., and the first three centuries of the Christian era. The first view is founded on the astronomical data of the *Paripatal* and the *Silappadikaram* yielding two dates 17th June 634 A.D. and 23rd July, 756 A.D. But during

Three  
Theories:  
7th and 8th  
Centuries  
A.D.

this period of Pallava dominance, the Cholas, the Pandyas and the Cheras were not conspicuous, and the Sangam works give prominence to these latter powers, without even mentioning the Pallavas. In Tamil India the seventh and eighth centuries witnessed the vigorous growth of Saivism and Vaishnavism which showed no tolerance to Buddhism or Jainism, whereas the Sangam age was one of profound religious peace unmarred by unseemly rivalry and characterised by the



co-operation in the literary field of Jains and Buddhists with the followers of Brahmanism. Therefore the first theory is untenable. The view that the fifth century was the 5th Century A.D. Sangam period is the result of the misinterpretation of Samudragupta's Pillar inscription so as to extend his southern invasion to Kerala, of the wrong identification of Mantaraja mentioned in that record with Mantaram Cheral of Sangam Literature, and of the untenable equation of the *Iambamoriyar* with Neo Mauryas or Guptas. Another apparent prop to this theory is the mention in the Buddhist Tamil epic, the *Manimekhalai*, of *kuchcharam kudigai* taken to mean a Gurjara building. But this expression need not signify anything other than a rock-cut cave. The main pillar of the view is demolished by the current reading and interpretation of the epigraph of Samudragupta, confining his southern martial career to the east coast of South India, north of Kanchipuram. The third theory is best supported and widely accepted. It rests on the synchronism of Senguttuvan Chera with Gajabahu of Ceylon. The *Silappadikaram* describes the installation of the image of Pattinidevi by Senguttuvan which function was graced by that Ceylon ruler. This synchronism is confirmed by the literary and artistic traditions of Ceylon. In the light of the *Mahavamsa*, Gajabahu (No 39 of the list of Ceylon kings) may be placed in 173—195 (or 177-199) A.D. The next Gajabahu (No 126) belongs to the first half of the twelfth century A.D. Therefore Senguttuvan's contemporary must have been Gajabahu I living in the latter half of the second century A.D. Among the Cheras of the Sangam age the former occupies chronologically a middle position. Therefore the first three centuries A.D. may be regarded as the Sangam period of Tamil history. This conclusion is in perfect harmony with the data relating to the Tamil kingdoms supplied by the classical authors of the I and II centuries A.D. and by the remarkable finds in South India of Roman coins of the early imperial period\*.

\* S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar *The Beginnings of South Indian History* (1918) Chapter IV. K. G. Seshu Aiyar *Cera Kings of the Sangam Period* (1937) Chapter VII.

**Karikala Chola** The legend of Karikala or Black Leg, though more extensive than his sober history, may be said to reflect his fame as the greatest Chola of the Sangam age. His foremost achievement was the defeat of his Chera and Pandya contemporaries backed up by as many as eleven chieftains, at Venni (Kovil Venni, near Tanjore). His other victories have been celebrated by poets, but his kingdom does not seem to have extended much beyond the Kaveri delta. His capital was Urayur (suburb of Trichinopoly), Puhar or Kaveripatnam being an alternative royal residence and chief port. He espoused the cause of Brahmanism and died a deeply lamented death. There is no historical basis for the story of his expedition to the foot of the Himalayas. His demise was followed by the providential destruction of the city and sea port of Puhar and a succession dispute between the Puhar and Urayur branches of the royal family. Among his successors was another hero of legend, Senganan, a celebrity of the later Sangam age, who is credited with a victory over the Cheras but his fame rests mainly on his alleged construction of about seventy temples dedicated to his favourite God Siva.

**Senguttuvan Chera** With Karikala's death and the subsequent internal troubles in the Chola kingdom, the primacy among the Tamil states passed on to Senguttuvan Chera or the Red Chera, the most distinguished among the Cheras. He is in reality the hero of the *Silappadikaram* composed by his brother. His Northern Indian achievements may be dismissed as mythical. But he was a great soldier who triumphed over many chieftains. He is said to have won naval victories as well, by repressing piracy he seems to have ensured the safety of the great port, Musiri or Cranganore. He interfered with effect in the Chola war of succession and kept the Pandyas in their place. He is said to have reigned for more than fifty years patronising literature and the orthodox and heterodox religions. His dedication of a temple to Pattinidevi was the occasion for a great gathering of princes including Gajabahu I of Ceylon. It is wrong to suppose that

**Battle of Venni**  
**Urayur and Puhar**  
**Senganan Chola**  
**His Military and Naval Activities**

the rule of succession among the Cheras of the age was from uncle to nephew instead of from father to son. The language of the country was Tamil Malayalam evolving only later

**The Vanji Karur Controversy** The capital was Vanji or Tiruvanjikalam suburb of Cranganore though a few scholars would identify it with Karur (Trichinopoly District)

No doubt Vanji was also called Karuvur and Ptolemy (A D 150) speaks of Karoura as the capital of Kerala. But Pliny and the author of the *Periplus* (1st century A D) mention Muziris or Cranganore as the Chera metropolis. Ptolemy's Karoura may be identified with Karuvapatana between Cranganore and Irinjinalakuda (Cochin State). No doubt Karur in the Trichinopoly District was the bone of contention among the three chief powers of the Tamil land, and sometimes it was held by the Cheras but it was never their capital.\* There were two branches of the royal

**Mantaram Cheral** family at Vanji and Tondi and some are inclined to add one more branch Mantaram Cheral of the elephant look was a later Chera

of the Sangam age, not the son of Senguttuvan. He belonged to the Tondi branch and was a distinguished soldier though overpowered by the Talaiyalanganattu Pandya.

**Nedunjelihan Pandya** Nedunjelihan lived between the periods of Senguttuvan and Senganan Chola and was the contemporary of Mantaram Cheral. He was the ablest of the

**Battle of Talaiyalanganam** Pandyas of the Sangam age who overcame the aggressive combination of the Chera, the Chola and five chieftains at Talaiyalanganam (Talaiyalamladu Tanjore District). Though he won

other victories he is enshrined in Tamil Literature as the Talaiyalanganattu Pandyan. He performed a sacrifice and patronised Brahmanism. He was a generous patron of poets; he contributed much to the glory of the third Sangam. Madura was his political and literary capital and Korkai, the chief sea port of the kingdom. The Pandya hegemony established by him remained intact till the rise of the Pallavas.

## SECTION X ADMINISTRATION

**Foreign Influence** The half millennium under survey is characterised by the introduction of new ideas into administration owing to the conquest of large parts of Northern and Western India by foreigners. It is the period *par excellence* of non Indian dynasties though South India was mostly under indigenous rule. The Satavahanas were to some extent affected by their constant contact with the Saka states in Maharashtra and Malwa. The independent Tamil country was free from such influences. But even in regions under foreign domination administration was in the main carried on according to Indian ideas and we have seen how the Greeks, Sakas and Pahlavas were rapidly Indianised. The Girnar inscription of Rudradaman I shows that the *Arthashastra* norms of administration continued to be of basic importance. The period under consideration indicates at the same time some development of administrative machinery, anticipative of the Gupta age. The republics of North Western India and Rajputana suffered at the hands of foreign rulers and Indian dynasts and were in constant conflict with them, but the extinction of those institutions belongs to a later period. The Greek experiment of autonomous cities was of limited scope and could not succeed in an age of dynastic aggression and racial conflict.

**Monarchy in Northern India** Unlike Asoka the kings of this period assumed sounding imperial titles like *Rajadhiraja* (Iranian) *Dharma Maharaja* and *Chakravarti* and Kanishka describes himself as *Deva-putra* (Chinese) and *Kaiser* (Roman). To a small extent the titles of queens changed and they blossomed into *Mahadevis* whereas Asoka's wives had been only *Devis*. It was the fashion to erect royal statues and even temples to kings here Roman influence is again perceptible. Joint rule of the king and one of his relatives prevailed here and there especially among the Greeks, Sakas and Pahlavas. The *Yuvaraja* or heir apparent rose gradually in influence and importance. We have mentioned the system of Kshatrapas and Mahakshatrapas. There were major officers with Greek designations—*Meridarch* (District Officer) and *Strategos* (Military Governor) corres-

ponding perhaps to *Amatya* and *Mahasenapati*. Provincial governors of the military type existed under the Satavahanas and then close connection with the rulers, sometimes matrimonial increased their power and in due course they contributed to the dismemberment of the empire. The District was called *rashtra*, *ahara* or *desa* and its official head *Rashtra pati*, *Amatya* or *Desadhakrit* respectively. The lowest units of the administration were the *grama* and the *nigama* (village and town).

**Tamil Kingship** The Sangam Literature proper gives us an idea of Tamil kingship perhaps not much divorced from reality, though the *Kural* of Tiruvalluvar draws an idealised picture. The system of hereditary monarchy was sometimes disturbed by succession quarrels. The plenitude of royal power must have been controlled to some extent in its exercise by ministerial advice and public opinion and by the constant exhortation to royalty to good behaviour. There is no reference in the Sangam Literature to the possibility of popular revolt against governmental authority, the dire consequence of maladministration being lack of prosperity and famine. The existence of representative institutions imagined by certain writers is nothing more than the reality of the king's ceremonial pomp though it is undeniable that his *sabha* advised him in judicial and general administration, and in the villages local assemblies were active. Though the *Kural* emphasises the absolutely corrupting and ruinous character of absolute power, it subscribes to the theory of royal omnipotence by making the king responsible even for rainfall, to which other works would add the chastity of women. It regards the king as his eyes, and places him in a position clean different from that of his subjects. Though its indebtedness to the *Arthashastra* and the Sanskrit sources in general is unmistakable its high moral tone is diametrically opposed to the tone of the *Arthashastra* and in conformity with that of the *Dharmasasthra*. The *saptanga* (seven limbs of sovereignty) theory and the *tritarga* (three aspects of man's objective) conception of the Sanskrit writers are mentioned in the *Kural*, which erects authority on moral foundations. It holds that material prosperity is worthless if there is no identity of interests between the king and his subjects. Unlike the *Arthashastra*, it condemns

benevolences or forced loans and regards sovereigns raising them as no better than robbers

## SECTION XI RELIGION

• **Brahmanism** This period saw the prominence of Brahmanism with its characteristic sacrifices Pushyamitra's religious impulse seems to have had far reaching consequences South India under the Satavahanas and the Tamil rulers paid special attention to the glorification of the orthodox religion by the performance on many occasions of Vedic sacrifices in a grand manner without adopting a truculent attitude towards Buddhism or Jainism What gave further strength to orthodox Brahmanism was an apparent compromise with Saivism and Vaishnavism which brought the two latter into the pale of orthodoxy We have seen how the Besnagar column is evidence of the appeal of Vaishnavism to the Greeks An inscription near Udaipur (Rajputana) of about 150 B C mentions a temple of Vasudeva Saivism secured the allegiance of Kadphises II and Vasudeva But foreigners were more attracted to Buddhism though as rulers they encouraged the religions of their principalities for example Nahapana and Ushavadata The latter's extensive charities to Brahmans and Buddhists are recorded in his Nasik inscriptions Rudradaman I as well as his successors became completely Hinduised and entered into matrimonial relations with the Satavahanas and the Ikshvakus There is a Syrian tradition vouching for the existence of the Krishna cult in Armenia in the second century B C

**Buddhism** Though Buddhism lost its position in Eastern India it won vital triumphs in the conversion of Menander and Kanishka The growth of Mahayana doctrine was conducive to the wide extension of Buddhism The fourth and last council held by Kanishka officially accepted that doctrine In due course Central Asia and China came under its influence The Satavahanas patronised Buddhism and the Ikshvakus went further in the same direction Throughout the Tamil country it was in a flourishing condition during the first three centuries of the Christian era

**Jainism** Like Buddhism Jainism ceased to be dominant in the Middle Country but Kharavela of Kalinga

championed its cause and played the part to some extent of a Jain Asoka. It was firmly established at Mathura and Ujjain. About 79 A D its followers became permanently divided into Svetambaras and Digambaras the former alone having the Order of nuns. In the Sangam age Jainism was important in the Tamil land but next only to Brahmanism. The Jews and Christians immigrated into Malabar in the early centuries of the Christian era.

## SECTION XII ECONOMIC CONDITION

**Industry.** The guild organisation of industry made further progress in this period. Inscriptions refer to the corporations of weavers, potters, manufacturers of oil, ivory workers, braziers, bamboo workers, and makers of hydraulic machines. A Nasik record of Ushavadata mentions his permanent deposit of 3,000 *kahapanas* in two guilds of weavers, the interest on which at twelve and nine per cent per annum was intended for the use of Buddhist monks as "cloth money and money for outside life." Another inscription in the same place makes provision for medical aid to monks by perpetual deposits in other guilds. This banking function of the guilds is a remarkable feature of their development. Charities in their name or by foremen of guilds are on record. A telling instance of mobility of labour is found in the *Manimekhalai*, the palace at Puhar was built by Māgadha artisans, Maratha mechanics, Malwa smiths and Yavana carpenters in co-operation with the Tamils. The chief industry of the Tamil land, the products of which were much appreciated in the West, was the weaving of cotton, and Indian muslins are described by Petronius as "webs of woven wind" and by Tamil poets as "the sloughs of serpents." The other economic activities of India will be clear from her exports to foreign countries.

**Sea-Ports.** The *Periplus* (A D 60) and Ptolemy's *Geography* (A D 150) give a full description of the sea ports and other centres of commercial activity. Beginning with North Western India, the chief places mentioned in those works are as follows. Barbaricon (Bahardipur) at the mouth of the Indus. Barygaza (Broach) controlled the traffic of and through North Western India, of Minnagara and Ujjain, and of Paithan and

Ter, Tyndis (Kadalundi or Ponnani), Muziris (Cranganore), Nelcynda (Kottayam), Baccare (Porakad), Comari (Cape Comorin), Colchoi (Korkai), Nicama (Negapatam), Camara (Kaveripatnam), Poduce (Pondicherry or Pulicat), Masalia (Masulipatam), Dosarene (in Orissa), and Gange (Tamluk?)

**Roman Trade** The exports from India may be divided into (a) Animals and animal products (b) Plant products, and (c) Mineral products \* (a) A few female slaves, eunuchs, elephant

<b>Exports</b>	drivers, cooks and prostitutes, a limited number
<b>and</b>	of lions, leopards, monkeys, tigers dogs, rhinocæ
<b>Imports</b>	roses and elephants, parrots, and perhaps
	peacocks and pythons, hides and furs, ghee,

wool of the shawl goat (from Kashmir and the Himalayas), musk, horns of the rhinoceros, ivory (the best variety from Orissa), tortoise shell, pearls (from the Pandya and Chola kingdoms), conch shells, silk (Chinese and Indian), etc., of these pearls ivory and parrots had the highest demand (b) Pepper (from Malabar and Travancore), called in Sanskrit *yavanapriya* or "beloved of the Greeks" chiefly the black variety and also white pepper and long pepper ginger, cardamom (from Malabar and Travancore), cinnamon (from the Himalayas, and inferior variety from Malabar), called *malabathrum* by the Greeks and Romans, spikenard oil (from the Himalayas), costus root (from Kashmir), garlands, Malabar tallow, indigo, lycium (from the Himalayas) gingly, cane-sugar, muslins (from Gujarat the Chola country, Masulipatam and Dacca, the last place producing the finest quality) and raw cotton, ebony, teak (Travancore, Malabar, Kanara and Gujarat) rosewood, sandal wood (Mysore, Coimbatore and Salem), aloes wood, cocoanut, Malabar plantains, melons, rice, etc., the most important of these exports were pepper, muslins, cinnamon spikenard, costus, teak and rice (c) Diamond, various kinds of quartz, sapphire, ruby, beryl (from Coimbatore, Salem and Mysore) asbestos, iron and steel, etc. The chief imports into India were slaves (including beautiful Greek singing girls), coral, linen, wine, lead, copper, tin, vases, lamps and glass

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\* E. H. Warmington *The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India* (1929) Part II



**Commercial History** The trade of Rome with India commenced under favourable auspices in the time of Augustus, who received embassies between 25 and 11 B.C. from North Western India, Western India, and the Chera and Pandya Kingdoms. By about A.D. 50, Western sailors had learnt that direct voyages to Malabar could be made in a shorter time than in the case of the old route along the West Coast of India, and ancient tradition attributed this discovery to "Hippalos." Consequently trade became more active though it took nearly four months in good weather to cover the distance from Rome to this country. Roman subjects resided permanently in the great commercial centres of India, and there was a temple of Augustus at Cranganore. The trade was prosperous throughout the first and second centuries A.D. Roman gold and silver coins have

Roman  
coins

been found in large quantities in the Coimbatore District, Travancore and Pudukkottai State, and to a small extent in other parts of India. In a

Greek vase of the second century A.D., discovered in 1899 at Oxyrhynchus, Egypt, Old Kannada passages occur, and the scene of action appears to be in the vicinity of Malpe, near Udipi (South Kanara District). The substantial adverse balance of trade for Rome resulted in the transfer of gold coins to India. Pliny notes that India drained Roman wealth

Economic  
Drain

to the extent of fifty five million *sesterces* (about £ 600,000) every year in return for luxuries

which were sold to the consumers for many times their Indian prices. Petronius, Seneca and Pliny thundered against the Roman use of pearls, ivory and muslins and even of pepper, and blamed the ladies in particular. Lollia Paulina, the Queen of Gaius, wore pearls and precious stones, worth forty million *sesterces*, at an ordinary marriage festivity. Nero decked his shoes with pearls. Even Seneca, the moralist, who condemned the luxury of the age, possessed five hundred tables with ivory legs. Persons were not wanting who wore only silk, bathed in spike-nard oil, and consumed the flesh of parrots, serving it to their pet animals. The success of the commercial activity of Rome

was due to its imperial organisation and to the honesty of her merchants. Though it was a grand achievement, the resulting economic drain speeded up the financial collapse of the Roman Empire.

• **India's Commercial Greatness** Though the commercial intercourse with Rome contributed to the wealth and prosperity of India, it was only a part of her wider activity in foreign trade. Many Far Eastern products reached Rome through India. Hence in studying the exports of India, we should distinguish between indigenous and foreign items. She was the centre of the commercial world extending from Spain to China, including Malayasia and maintained close contact with Arabia, Persia, Central Asia, China, Malaya and the Archipelago and her trade relations constituted the foundation of her colonising effort in South Eastern Asia.

### SECTION XIII SOCIAL LIFE

**Indianisation of Foreigners** We have observed the rapid Indianisation of the foreign invaders who established their rule in Northern and Western India. The caste system should have been sufficiently elastic to accommodate them in Indian Society. The tendency of the *bhakti* cult to pass over caste barriers evidenced by the Besnagar inscription cannot be overlooked. After the absorption of the foreigners into the social polity, we find emphasis laid on the four *varnas* as in the *Bhagavad Gita*, and rulers like Gautamiputra Satakarni proclaimed their resolve to preserve the purity of castes. Though the foreigners were Indianised, they could not give up their old social practices. The Scythian custom of *sati* must have been supported by the barbarian invaders and they must have encouraged stitched clothes which were no doubt known in the age of the Buddha for example, the bodice. The exposure of the breasts of women by artists was intended to heighten the artistic effect, and cannot favour the theory of inadequate and indecent dressing.

**Vatsyayana** The complaint of the Pauranikas that there was a debasement of the moral currency consequent on the foreign invasions seems to be well founded. We have seen that the age, in spite of its aggressive militarism and racial conflict, was one of great material progress. In

such an environment social stability required an ideal of human conduct not far removed from the practicable, and Vatsyayana emphasises attention to all the three *puru-sharthas* (objects of man's endeavour)—*dharma*, *artha* and *kama*—with a view to the attainment of the ultimate end of human effort—*moksha*. From our point of view, his stress on the satisfaction of human desires without detriment to *Dharma* or morality, makes him the exponent of a reasonable social ideal divorced from the incurable puritanism of the Dharmasastrakaras. Though he has been called "the Machiavelli of erotics" and bracketed with Kautilya their points of view are different. While the Arthasastrakara recommends the adoption of questionable methods to reach the goal, Vatsyayana, the author of the *Kama Sutra*, condemns unhealthy and immoral practices though he describes them in order to make his treatise on love complete. In the field of sex, he anticipates in some respects the views of the present century, though his anatomy and physiology may not be all right and though some of his prescriptions may smack of the medicine man's recipe. He mentions a number of his predecessors and acknowledges his indebtedness to them. He is a liberal social thinker who never loses sight of the realities of life. He never quarrels with human nature, but fights against its perversion. Some would identify him with Kautilya, who had the alternative name Vatsyayana. He resembles Kautilya in some respects, but not enough to suggest his identity with him, even granting that the chronological difficulty may be adjusted.

**Date** Vatsyayana mentions Kuntala Satakarni, the thirteenth Andhra king of the Puranic list who lived towards the close of the 1st century B C, and Kottaraja, an Abhira king. On the ground that the Abhiras were powerful rulers in Western India in the 3rd century A D, the *Kamasutradhara* is assigned to that century\*. Regarding Kuntala Satakarni as a contemporary of Vatsyayana some would place the latter in the beginning of the 1st century A D, while there are others who are inclined to assign him to the 4th century A D on the untenable ground that Kautilya belonged to the 3rd century

\* H. C. Chakradar *Social Life in Ancient India* (1929) Chapter I

A D and that an interval of one century should be allowed between him and the Kamasutrakara. There is practically no doubt that he lived in the early centuries of the Christian era, and the 3rd century A D is the best working hypothesis.

**Description of India.** Vatsyayana's account of *desyopacharas* or local customs is interesting, and shows to some extent the adverse effect of foreign invasion on morality. The Madhyadesa (the region between the Ganges and the Jumna) is described as the home of clean habits in which even kissing was regarded as a dirty practice, and Eastern Indians even purer, their people being considered as *Sishtas* (of most decent habits). Saketa, Mathura and the Panjab are condemned. The women of Bactria were on the whole of decent habits, but practised polyandry and reduced their husbands to the status of ladies in a harem. Such customs prevailed in the neighbouring regions as well—Strirajya and Gramanari Vishaya. In Sindh, Kathiawar, Gujarat, North Konkan and Vidarbha irregularities prevailed in the royal harem. The characteristics of Malwa, Maratha and Andhra ladies are enumerated. The Dakshinatyas or South Indians are mentioned as marrying the daughters of their maternal uncles and said to practise something like circumcision. Dangerous practices are illustrated by tragedies connected with Kuntala Satakarni, a Chola king and a Pandya commander in chief. Because Vatsyayana is detailed in his description of Western India and because he frequently quotes Apastamba, it is thought that, like the latter, he belonged to that part of India, though some would regard Pataliputra as his home.

**Marriage** Vatsyayana insists upon young men marrying their equals in social status with a view to happiness, after completing their education and acquiring an adequate knowledge of the science of love. His list of qualifications and defects of brides is to some extent laughable as he is against the choice of a girl as bride whose name is that of a river or a *nikshatra* (star). His classifications are sometimes too artificial. But he lived in ancient India and inherited many old world ideas and superstitions. Even the greatest man of a particular age can rise above its ideas only to a limited extent. Vatsyayana concludes that a man will be

happy if he marries the woman on whom his heart and his eye are set. He would tolerate a disparity of three to seven years in the ages of the husband and wife and no more, while the Dharmaśāstrakaras allow a man of thirty to marry a girl of ten or twelve. He contemplates pre-puberty and post-puberty marriages. He mentions the eight kinds of marriage described in the law books and regards the *gandharva* form as the best because it is based on love.

**The Nagaraka.** Vatsyayana's *nagaraka* or man about town is his ideal of a cultured and fashionable gentleman. He describes his house, his daily life, his club activities, etc. In one respect, he is old-fashioned from our point of view—he shaves only twice a week. In short his life is one of well-regulated worldly pleasure. Though he is an educated man with literary and aesthetic taste, his wife is only an ideal housewife with some amount of literacy and knowledge of the world. Remarriage of widows is permitted by Vatsyayana in cases of necessity, but the *punarbhū* (remarried woman) did not enjoy the social status of a wife. *Ganikas* or public women of the intellectual and refined type, whose accomplishments were appreciated by good husbands, came into intimate social contact with them without offending public taste. Public opinion generously tolerated their activities and welcomed their charities and benefactions without however justifying their private lives.

#### SECTION XIV. CULTURE

**Writing and Language.** Though the Kharoṣṭhī and Greek scripts prevailed in North Western India, Brahmi was coming into prominence, the Western Satraps using it in their inscriptions, and the Satavahanas as well. The Sanskrit language was slowly gaining ground from the second century B C, and Rudradaman's famous record of A D 150 marks the first great step in its ascendancy. The Mahayanists employed it for sacred and profane purposes. Brahmi cave inscriptions belonging to the third and second centuries B C are found in the Pandya country, and in the early Christian centuries Vatteluttu came into existence.

**Literature: Brahmanical.** Bhasa is usually assigned to the second or first century B C though some would

take him to the fifth century B C while a few others

**Bhasa** regard him as posterior to Asvaghosa. The plays discovered in Travancore in 1912 have been attributed to him, and the Bhasa theory has divided scholars. He was a Vaishnava drawing the materials of his dramas from the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*. His greatest play is the *Svapnavasavadatta*, and Kalidasa refers

**Patanjali** to him as his famous predecessor. Patanjali, the great grammarian, criticises the works of Panini and Katyayana, defends Panini generally against Katyayana, and occasionally finds fault with Panini. He completes the development of his science, and his *Mahabhashya* is regarded as the model commentary written in simple and lucid prose. The *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* assumed

**Manu** final shape towards the close of this epoch. The *Dharmasastra* of Manu must be assigned to the period, 200 B C to A D 200, and its fame gradually spread throughout India and in the Indian colonies of South Eastern

**Yajna-  
valkya** Asia. The next Smritikara, Yajnavalkya, seems to have lived in the 3rd century A D. We have already assigned Vatsyayana, the Kamasutrakara,

to the same century. The *Natyasastra* of Bharata relating to the theatrical art belongs to the 2nd or 3rd century A D. The *Yoga*, *Nyaya* and *Vaisheshika Sutas*, composed by Patanjali, Gautama and Kanada respectively, are to be assigned to the period under review, though some would ascribe to it the composition of all the philosophical *Sutas*. A few scholars

**Vatsyayana  
and  
Bharata** identify the *Yogasutarakara* with the *Mahabhashyakara*, and the *Nyayabhashyakara* Vatsyayana with the *Kamasutralara*,

but these views are generally rejected. Medical literature was enriched by Charaka and Susruta who lived in the early centuries of the Christian era and who along with Vagbhata of the 7th century A D, constitute the medical trio. Charaka was patronised by

**Charaka  
and  
Susruta** Kanishka and his *Samhita* dealing with the eight "limbs" of medicine is the greatest authority on the subject. He was not only a doctor, but a scholar well versed in many *sastras*.

His work became popular later in Persia and Arabia. The

*Susruta Samhita* is devoted to surgery and mentions a large variety of surgical instruments, its fame spread in Arabia and Cambodia. Though widows and the poor are recommended for free treatment, it is curious that medical aid is denied to sinners, hunters etc. The treatises of Charaka and Susruta are free from Greek influence, the alleged indebtedness to Hippocrates the father of ancient Greek medicine, is untenable because the theory of *tridosha* or "three humours" is an old Indian doctrine. A work on astrology, the *Garga Samhita*, exhibits no Greek influence, and the historical value of its *Yugapurana* section has been indicated.

**Buddhist** The canonical literature of Hinayana Buddhism was completed in the third century B C. The most important Pali work in the subsequent centuries is the *Milinda panha* or *Questions of Milinda* (Menander), a philosophical work in the form of question and answer, the leading figures being Menander and Nagasena a Buddhist theologian. The bearing of this work on the Bactrian king's conversion to Buddhism has been noted. Sanskrit was the adopted language of Mahayanaism. The *Saddharmapundarika* outlines the doctrines of Mahayana and develops the conception of the Buddha as the great god. *Asvaghosha* is the greatest writer of the second century A D, taking his whole literary activity into account. His *Buddhacharita* is a *mahakavya*, and its sequel is the *Saundarananda kavya*. He wrote a drama called the *Sariputra prakarana* and two others of the allegorical and *hetaera* or courtesan types. His Mahayanist treatise is the *Mahayanasradhotpada*. His *Vajrasuchi* is a condemnation of the caste system in the light of Brahmanical literature itself. His fame is unique in the field of letters, it is said that "in his richness and variety he recalls Milton, Goethe, Kant and Voltaire." He was the great predecessor of Kalidasa, who was to some extent influenced by him.

**Asvaghosha** *putra prakarana* and two others of the allegorical and *hetaera* or courtesan types. His Mahayanist treatise is the *Mahayanasradhotpada*. His *Vajrasuchi* is a condemnation of the caste system in the light of Brahmanical literature itself. His fame is unique in the field of letters, it is said that "in his richness and variety he recalls Milton, Goethe, Kant and Voltaire." He was the great predecessor of Kalidasa, who was to some extent influenced by him.

**Nagarjuna** Nagarjuna was a South Indian Brahman who became a Buddhist and subsequently the founder of the Madhyamika school of Buddhism. He composed the *Madhyamika Sstras*, and his *sunyavada* shows the utter unreality of the phenomenal world and anticipates Bradley's

*Appearance and Reality* His teaching influenced Vedāntins like Sankara, who however condemns nihilism. As a controversialist and philosopher, Nagarjuna was the greatest personality in the second century A.D. In spite of the increasing importance of Sanskrit, a few great Prakrit works were composed during this period. We have mentioned Hala's work on love. A much greater production is the *Bṛhatkatha* of

Gunadhya. Gunadhya the loss of which has been to some extent compensated by the Sanskrit versions of Kashmirian authors, it is a store house of stories utilised later by many men of letters.

**Art** The rock cut *vihara* (monastery) at Bhaja (near Poona) contains the earliest sculpture of the period—early second century B.C., though some would assign it to the next century—, characterised by realism and uninfluenced by ethical or spiritual considerations. The greatest of the rock hewn *chaityas* (temples) with its grand hall at Karle (near Bombay) is much later, belonging probably to the close of the first century B.C., it is "one of the most magnificent monuments in all India."\* There are *chaitya* halls at Junnar, Nasik, Ajanta and other places. Many caves were excavated for the Jains in Orissa. Thus cave architecture and sculpture made greater progress than in the period of Asoka.

**Bharhut and Sanchi Stupas** The Bharhut *stupa* (about 150 B.C.) is famous for its sculptured gateway and railings illustrative of the Buddha's life. The Bodhi Gaya railing (about 100 B.C.) is another example of the art of the Sunga age. The four gateways of the Sanchi *stupa*, "the most perfect and most beautiful of all the monuments of the Early School"† of Indian art, are assigned to the latter half of the first century B.C. Here again we find bas-reliefs illustrating the *Jataka* stories of the Buddha, who is represented by a symbol, not by his figure. "By the side of these mature and elaborate compositions the reliefs of Bharhut are stiff and awkward, and we are conscious of the gulf which separates the two and of

\* A. K. Coomaraswamy *History of Indian and Indonesian Art* (1927) p. 29

† C. H. I, I p. 627



the great advance that sculpture must have made during the century or more that elapsed between them".\* At Mathura the progress of art corresponds to that of Bharhut till the advent of the Satraps, and then decline sets in and continues till the Kushan period. There is substantial improvement in the minor arts—terracotta work and metal ornaments. The Gudimallam (North Arcot District) *Sivalingam* is said to belong to the second or first century B C. Pre-Christian Indian painting is found at Ajanta (the Nizam's State) and Jogimara (Orissa).

**Gandhara Sculpture** The home of the Gandhara school of sculpture is the territory dominated by Peshawar and its best productions may be assigned to A D 50—200, the Kushan period. This sculpture is Buddhist, and the characteristic works are statues and reliefs. Considered as pictures of human life they represent as in a mirror a vivid image of almost every phase of the life of Northern India, lay and clerical, during several centuries. Every class of the population from prince to pariah is represented, and in short, no subject of human interest was regarded as material unsuitable for the sculptor's chisel.† Various types of the Buddha image were produced—the prince, the ascetic with only his skeleton intact, the Enlightened, etc. The reliefs depict his birth, his renunciation, his temptation, etc. Figures of Kubera and others mentioned in Buddhist Literature were made and subordinated to the main theme—the Buddha's life. Thus the Gandhara sculpture is unique as far as India is concerned, and Greek influence is patent though the subject is Indian. But gradually non-Indian elements were eliminated. Therefore the influence of the Gandhara school on Indian art in general is very limited.

**Mathura and Amaravati** Though the Mathura school developed on indigenous lines, the influence of Gandhara sculpture was exerted on it in the Kushan period. The Amaravati (Guntur District) *stupa* may be assigned to about 200 B C, but the great railing with its sculpture is later—

\* *Ibid* p 632.

† V A Smith *A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon* (1930) pp 56 57

A D 150-250 Here again the life of the Buddha is depicted in stone "It would hardly be possible to exaggerate the luxurious beauty or the technical proficiency of the Amaravati reliefs, this is the most voluptuous and the most delicate flower of Indian sculpture We find side by side the old method of representing the Buddha by symbols and the human figure of more recent introduction \* We have already mentioned the buildings at Nagarjunikonda To this period belong the *chaitya* hall at Kanheri (near Bombay) and the *vihara* at Nasik

**Ajanta Painting** The cave paintings at Ajanta belong to different ages and constitute the most important mass of ancient painting extant in the world, Pompeii only excepted † The earliest group assigned to the first century B C in caves IX and X may be attributed to the patronage of the Satavahanas The seated woman and the elephants are worthy of note

**Foreign Influence** Barring Gandhara art, Indian art from the third century B C to the third century A D was to some extent subjected to Persian and Greek influences Still the artists of early India were quick with the versatility of all great artists to profit by the lessons which others had to teach them The art which they practised was essentially a national art, having its root in the heart and in the faith of the people and giving eloquent expression to their spiritual beliefs and to their deep and intuitive sympathy with nature Hellenistic art never took a real and lasting hold upon India for the reason that the temperaments of the two peoples were radically dissimilar To the Greek, man man's beauty, man's intellect were everything But these ideals awakened no response in the Indian mind Where Greek thought was ethical his was spiritual, where Greek was rational, his was emotional And to these higher aspirations these more spiritual instincts he sought at a later date, to give articulate expression by translating them into terms of

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\* Coomaraswamy *op cit* pp 70 71

† Smith *Ibid* p 94

*hemidrachm* (*half drachm*) Demetrios struck copper coins with legends in two scripts—Greek and Kharoshthi on the obverse and the reverse respectively. Eukratides imitated him and issued copper and silver coins and one of his copper coins contains the figure of Zeus who is described as the city god of Kapisa. The coins of Apollodotos and Menander are abundant, and their circulation at Bouch as late as the first century A.D., is vouched for by the *Periplus*. The portrait heads of two queens Agathokleia and Kalliope are found together with those of Strato I (son of the former) and Hermaios (husband of the latter). The silver coins of the Antialkidas are also numerous. In general, the portraits on the obverse are so clear and realistic that we can gain some idea of the physical characters of the Indo-Greek kings. Devices on the reverse include animals like the elephant and the bull. Indo-Greek coinage supplies an excellent example of cultural assimilation. The exclusively Hellenistic features of Bactrian coinage were gradually modified by the introduction of Indian elements. It shows that the engravers were no mere slavish copyists of Western models, but were giving free and spontaneous expression to their own ideas.\*

**Saka and Pahlava** The copper coins of Maues show Greek gods and goddesses and the elephant's head in imitation of a certain coin of Demetrios. On one coin he is seated on horse back. In the silver and copper coins of Azes I Lakshmi is found along with Greek gods and goddesses and on one copper piece he is seated cross-legged. The name Vonones is found along with that of his brother or his nephew Gondopheres appears on horse back on the obverse of his billon (alloy of silver and copper) coins while on the reverse sometimes Siva is found. The Indian *strategos* Aspavarman's name is found on the coins of both Azes I and Gondopheres indicating the connection between the Saka and Pahlava rulers. The re-striking of the coins of Apollodotos and Hippostratos by Azes I shows the Saka conquest of the Indo-Greek kingdom. The linguistic fashion was continued by the Sakas and the Pahlavas.

form and colour. But that was not until the more spacious times of the Guptas.\*

### Coinage "Punch-marked" and Die-struck

The oldest coinage of India is represented by a few silver bars with three circular dots or with devices punched on one side, but all over India are found 'punch marked' coins or *puranas* in rectangular and circular forms cut from leaves of silver with a few devices on the obverse and in some cases on both sides. Taken together the devices range from human and animal figures to religious and planetary symbols. These coins which may be assigned to the period, 600 to 200 B.C. continued in circulation even later, particularly in South India. Therefore the invasion of India by Alexander the Great had no influence on Indian coinage though an Indian prince Saubhuti imitated the Greek example and struck a silver coin. Casting of copper coins was practised in India from the fifth century to the third century B.C. Die-struck coins came into existence in North Western India towards the close of the fourth century B.C., with devices like the *stambha*, *bodhi tree* or *vihara*. Double die coins again of North Western India, are better and show Iranian influence though devices like the bull and the elephant are Indian. But the Mitra coins of the second and first centuries B.C., with the names of ten kings (Sunga) in Brahmi script and the Mathura coins with twelve royal names, though double die struck, are free from foreign influence. The coins of Malwa illustrate the transition from 'punch marked' to die-struck coinage. Thus a system of coinage originated in India and evolved on indigenous lines till Greek contact in the second century B.C. and the following centuries improved and enriched it.†

**Indo-Greek** The Greek coins in India have given us the names of thirty three rulers most of whom are unknown to other sources of history. Their characteristic features are portrait heads and bilingual legends, most of them are circular and conform to the Persian or Indian standard of weight. The silver coins are the *didrachm* (double drachm) and the

\* C. H. I. I pp 644 and 649

† O. J. Brown *The Coins of India* (1922) Chapter I

*hemidrachm* (half drachm) Demetrios struck copper coins with legends in two scripts—Greek and Kharoshthi on the obverse and the reverse respectively. Eukratides imitated him and issued copper and silver coins, and one of his copper coins contains the figure of Zeus who is described as the city god of Kapisa. The coins of Apollodotos and Menander are abundant, and their circulation at Broach as late as the first century A.D., is vouched for by the *Periplus*. The portrait heads of two queens, Agatholeia and Kalliope are found together with those of Strato I (son of the former) and Hermaios (husband of the latter). The silver coins of the Antialkidas are also numerous. In general, the portraits on the obverse are so clear and realistic that we can gain some idea of the physical characters of the Indo-Greek kings. Devices on the reverse include animals like the elephant and the bull. Indo-Greek coinage supplies an excellent example of cultural assimilation, the exclusively Hellenistic features of Bactrian coinage were gradually modified by the introduction of Indian elements. It shows that the engravers were no mere slavish copyists of Western models, but were giving free and spontaneous expression to their own ideas.\*

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\* C.H.I., I, p. 645.

**Western Kshatrapa** Nahapana and Chashtana imitated the Greek *hemidrachm* and used Greek on the obverse and Kharoshthi and Nagari (modified Brahmi) on the reverse. After the death of Chashtana, Kharoshthi drops out and his descendants used the Buddhist *chakritya* symbol on the reverse and their portraits characteristically Saka, on the obverse of their *hemidrachms*. From the reign of Jivadaman (2nd half of the 1st century A.D.), the grandson of Rudradaman I, the date of issue is given invariably down to the end of the dynasty.

**Kushan** The Roman influence on Kushan coins has already been detailed. The copper coins of Khadphises I contain the bull on the obverse and the Bactrian camel on the reverse. Khadphises II issued the double *stater*, the *stater* (*dinara* from Roman *denarius*), the quarter-*stater*, and on some of these coins, he appears cross legged on a couch or his head or bust is found. On one coin he is seated in a chariot drawn by two horses. His copper coins represent him as standing and placing an offering on an altar. "The portrait of the king is most realistic though hardly flattering—a corpulent figure with a long heavy face and a large nose, he appears wearing the long Kushana cloak and tall 'Gilgit' boots, on his head a conical hat with streamers." On the reverse of his coins is found Siva or his characteristic symbol. Kanishka uses corrupt Greek for his coin legends. The reverse of his gold and copper coins exhibits a variety of gods: Greek Helios, Herakles and Selene, Hindu Siva, Iranian Athro, 'Fire,' Oado, the wind god, Ardokheho and Nana, and the Buddha. On the obverse of some of his coins he is standing, and on a few of his copper coins sitting on a throne. Huvishka's copper coin shows him seated cross legged, seated with raised arms reclining on a couch and riding an elephant and on the reverse many gods appear. Siva and Nandi are characteristic of the reverse of Vasudeva's issues and on the other side the king is standing. The coins of the successors of Vasudeva are degenerate imitations of his type and of that of Kanishka. Yaudheyas and other republican tribes imitated the copper coinage of the Kushans, just as the Kunindas and

others of the Panjab had copied Greek and Saka types in the first century. B C

**Andhra** The coins of the Andhras are found in the Krishna Godavari Valley North Konkan the Central Provinces and Malwa. The earliest pieces are assigned to about 150 B C. The metal employed is mostly potin (billon) and lead the legends are in Brahmi and the devices the *chaitja* bow and elephant. Gautamiputra Satakarni re struck many of the numerous coins of Nahapana in token of his grand victory over him. We have noticed the ship coins of Yajna Satakarni.

**Tamil** The earliest coins are mere weights of gold with a punch mark on one side the cup shaped padma tankas reveal punch marks on both sides and die-struck coins followed. Punch marked coins continued in circulation till about A D 200. During the early centuries of the Christian era Roman gold currency prevailed. Some copper ship coins seem to be imitations of Andhra types and are assigned to the 3rd century A D. the earliest Pallava coins are of this kind.

**Foreign Influence** Obviously Indian coinage during 200 B C—A D 300 is much indebted to the Greek achievement but the process of gradual Indianisation of the foreign art is unmistakable. A careful inspection of the successive coinages of the Indo-Greeks the Sakas and the Kushanas will show that the strongest influences of pure Greek art had passed away before the reign of Kanishka. In the Kushan (Kanishkan) period the whole fabric of the coins if not entirely Indian is far more oriental than Greek. After all is said the art was produced in India and must have been largely if not entirely the work of Indian craftsmen.\*

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\* Brown *op. cit* p 28.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE GUPTA AGE (300—600)

#### SECTION I CHANDRAGUPTA I (320—c 330)

**Sri Gupta and Ghatotkacha** The predecessors of Maharajadhiraja Chandragupta I were Maharaja Sri Gupta and Maharaja Ghatotkacha, according to the Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudragupta and other Gupta inscriptions. *This distinction in political status between Chandragupta I and his predecessors may be regarded as well founded, and the latter treated as local princes of Magadha* I tsing, the Chinese pilgrim, who travelled in India between 671 and 695 refers to Maharaja Sri Gupta as the builder of a temple 'five hundred years before' This reference would assign the first known Gupta to about 195 Obviously more than a century is untenable for two rulers as the accession of Chandragupta I took place in 320 Therefore Sri Gupta may be assigned to the last quarter of the third century and Ghatotkacha to the first two decades of the following century I tsing's statement may be broadly interpreted as referring to the fifth century counting back from his own time (seventh century), i.e. the third century (c)

**Chandragupta I.** About Chandragupta I we know from his title of Maharajadhiraja (though a later record styles him merely Maharaja) that his position was different from that of his grandfather and father He must have founded the Gupta era of 320 as he was the first imperial Gupta the recent attempt to push back the commencement of that era to 200 is not generally appreciated His marriage with Kumara devi, a Lichchhavi princess, is alluded to with so much pride and satisfaction in the records of his successors that the inference is legitimate that it must have contributed to the rise of the Guptas As we possess neither his inscriptions nor his coins—though a few scholars would attribute some coins to him—, his imperial position is an inference from the records of others, and we are in the dark about his achievements entitling him to that position According to the *Puranas*, the Gupta dominions included Magadha, Allahabad and Oudh



and this is generally regarded as descriptive of the kingdom of Chandragupta I but some would take that description as referable to the time of his predecessors. The effects of the *Lachchhavi* matrimonial connection are estimated variously by scholars. Thus there is much obscurity about the activities of Chandragupta I justifying his imperial title and his foundation of an era.

**The Kaumudimahotsava** Recently attempts have been made to throw further light on the career of the first imperial Gupta. Dr K P Jayaswal has reconstructed his history in the light of the data provided by the *Kaumudimahotsava* a Sanskrit drama regarded as the work of a lady\*. The story is that one Chandasena usurped the throne of Magadha and ruled with an iron hand with the support of the *Lachchhavis*. Consequent on a popular revolt the usurper was expelled and his dynasty abolished. According to Dr Jayaswal, Samudragupta effected the restoration of his dynasty to the imperial throne of Pataliputra by his warlike career. The historical value of the drama depends mainly on the validity of the identification of Chandasena with Chandragupta I, but the grounds for the identification are not adequate though the tendency in some quarters to disparage dramatic tradition in general from the historical point of view is to be regretted†.

**The Meharauli Inscription** Another attempt to elucidate the imperial career of Chandragupta I is to regard him as the Chandra of the posthumous Iron Pillar inscription at Meharauli (near Delhi) who after his victory in Bengal crossed the seven mouths of the Indus inflicted a defeat on the *Bṛhlikas* (and) acquired the sole rule of the earth by long continued efforts of his own arms. The last words are emphasised to bring out Chandra's acquisition of an empire by self effort though they may be regarded as merely conventional. The achievements mentioned in the record harmonise better with the conquest of the Western Satraps by Chandragupta II, on some of whose coins the shortened form of his name—Chandra—occurs. In the light of the inscriptional data it is

\* Jayaswal *History of India 150 A D to 350 A D* (1933) pp 113-18

† *A Volume of Eastern and Indian Studies presented to Prof F W Thomas* (1939) pp 115-20

not proper to identify Chandra with any petty ruler. The choice lies between Chandragupta I and II. More definite evidence is desirable before the Mehrauli record is ascribed to the former. If such evidence is available, he may be regarded as the Gupta Philip and his son as the Gupta Alexander\*.

## SECTION II SAMUDRAGUPTA (c. 330—c. 380)

**Accession** It is supposed by a few scholars that Chandragupta I was succeeded by his first son, Kacha whose coins exist. This view is propped up by the fact recorded in the Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudragupta that he was chosen heir-designate by his father, with the result that the rejected candidates became disconsolate, and by the supposition that that record suggests a war of succession before Samudragupta could be at ease at Pataliputra. But Kacha has no place in the official genealogy which mentions Samudragupta as the immediate successor of Chandragupta I. Further the Kacha coins are the same as those of Samudragupta in weight, fabric and type, and the legends describe him as "the exterminator of all kings" and as "conqueror of the world who conquers heaven by his best actions"—expressions applied to Samudragupta in other records. Therefore the identity of the two is extremely probable and it may be surmised that Samudragupta was called Kacha, short for the name of his grandfather, Ghatotkacha, 330 is merely the conjectural date of his accession to the throne.

**The Pillar Inscription** The long, undated inscription of Samudragupta in Classical Sanskrit, incised on an Asokan pillar, probably originally at Kausambi, but now at Allahabad is in the Gupta variety of the Nagari script, all the 33 lines constitute a single gigantic sentence with a beautiful verse (lines 7 and 8) regarded by competent critics to be not unworthy of Kalidasa. It was composed by Mahadandanayaka (Commander in Chief) Harisena. It was once treated as a posthumous record of Samudragupta because the ascent of his fame to Indra's region was understood as his translation to the other world. But the absence of any reference to his

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\* Cf. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, *Studies in Gupta History* (1927) p. 35.

*asvamedha* from the epigraph is decisive proof of its composition during the lifetime of Samudragupta. The order in which events are mentioned cannot be taken as the chronological order. Though some of the personal and place names of the record have not been identified satisfactorily, the contents of the document are on the whole clear. Omitting the conventional phraseology appearing here and there and refusing to underline the etceteras, we may regard the inscription as thoroughly historical. Upon this single record rests the name and fame of the real founder of the Gupta Empire, except in the first four lines, there are no serious *lacunae* in it.

**Samudragupta's Accomplishments** The first part of the Pillar inscription describes Samudragupta as one who, in his own person, resolved the eternal conflict between poetry and prosperity or learning and wealth, in other words he was both king and poet. He was chosen by his father as the heir apparent on account of his real worth, and the courtiers were delighted, while his brothers were confounded, this idea is conveyed to us in a remarkable verse in such a manner that we feel we see the whole scene with our own eyes. Then his "extirpation" of Achyuta and Nagasena is described, his capture of a member of the Kota family and his residence at Pataliputra, free from any anxiety. This datum is inadequate for founding upon it the theory of a disputed succession. Then his moral, intellectual and warlike qualities are detailed, his love of *dharma*, his piercing intellect, his learning (poetry) and his valour (*parakramanka*). Here is a second reference to his ability as a poet.

**His South Indian Expedition** The next part of the inscription is the most important. It enumerates the conquests of Samudragupta and their effects on his imperial position. He "captured and liberated" Mahendra of Kosala, Vyaghraraja of Mahakantara, Mantaraja of Kurula, Mahendragiri of Pishtapura, Svamidatta of Kottura, Damana of Erandapalla, Vishnugopa of Kanchi, Nilaraja of Avamukta, Hastivarman of Vengi, Ugrasena of Palakka, Kubera of Devarashtra, Dhananjaya of Kusthalapura and "all the other kings of Dakshinapathia". The extent of Samudragupta's conquests in South India can be correctly determined only if those place names are properly

identified Kurala as Kerala and identifying Kottura with Kothur (Coimbatore District) and Palakka with Palghat (South Malabar District) it was once thought that Samudragupta's invasion covered most of South India and Dr Hoernle went further on the basis of the expression 'all the other kings of Dakshinapatha' and described the Gupta Empire as more extensive than the Maurya Empire. But those identifications are now held as untenable. Though the equation of Kurala with Colair lake (Godavari District) or Khurda Road (Orissa) is unsatisfactory, Kottura is Kothoor (Ganjam District) and Palakka is Pakkal (Nellore District). The identification of Erandapalla with Erandol (Khandesh District, Bombay) and of Devarashtra with Maharashtra led to the belief that Samudragupta returned home from Kanchi via Western India. But Erandapalla is taken as identical with Erandapali (Ganjam District) and Devarashtra with Yellamanchili Taluk of the Vizagapatam District by Prof Jouveau Dubreuil, and therefore there is no question of the inclusion of the Maratha country within Samudragupta's sphere of operations. Kosala is South Kosala. Mahakantara is the neighbouring forest region, and Pishtapura is Pithapuram (Godavari District). Vengi and Kanchi are obvious. Avamukta and Kusthalapura must be near one of the places mentioned above in the Andhradesa. Therefore Samudragupta's expedition was confined to the East Coast as far as Kanchipuram. Prof Jouveau Dubreuil thinks that the alleged liberation of South Indian potentates means in plain language the defeat of Samudragupta probably by a confederacy of princes and observes 'It is no more a new Alexander marching victoriously through South India, it was simply the unfortunate attempt of a king from the North who wanted to annex the coast of Orissa but completely failed'.\* The French scholar imagines that Samudragupta was no boy catching butterflies and setting them free. But the reinstatement of conquered kings was not at all novel, even Alexander treated Poros generously in the end. The Pillar inscription distinguishes clearly between extirpation and liberation—two different policies pursued by Samudragupta with regard to Northern and

\* Jouveau Dubreuil *Ancient History of the Dekkan* pp 60-61

Southern India respectively, and refers to the activities of his officers in connection with the restoration of the wealth of the vanquished princes. The idea of a confederacy is purely imaginary. No doubt the East Coast was not annexed to the Gupta Empire, and this is in accordance with the indications in the record itself. The severest critic of the Gupta monarch alludes to his probable initial success, even this may be consistently denied by him. As far as the available evidence goes, the success of the expedition is unquestionable. It may be conjecturally assigned to about 350. It is mainly on the strength of his South Indian achievement that Dr Smith hails Samudragupta as the Indian Napoleon. The *Arthashastra* of Kautilya mentions three types of conquerors *Dharmavijayi*, *Lobhavijayi* and *Asuravijayi* (righteous, covetous and devilish conquerors), and on the ground that he reinstalled the South Indian princes, some would regard Samudragupta as a righteous conqueror, but in Northern India he behaved like an *Asuravijayi*. Only a speculative answer is possible to the question why he did not incorporate the conquered southern territory in his empire. Perhaps his ambition was only to secure recognition of his imperial position in South India. He annexed the Vakataka territory in Central India, but did not touch their possessions in the Dakhan. His numerous alliances in Northern and Western India show that he cared more for paramountcy than for a very extensive empire. It appears that he was a statesman as well as a great soldier.

**His Annexations and Alliances.** As regards Samudragupta's annexations in Northern India, he claims to have exterminated Rudradeva, Malita, Nagadatta, Chandra varman, Ganapati-naga, Nagasena Achyuta Nandin Balavai man and other kings of Aryavarta. Of these, Achyuta and Nagasena seem to have encountered Samudragupta twice. All the princes mentioned above ruled over territories included in the upper Gangetic Valley, Central India and Eastern India. Samudragupta's allies were numerous in North Eastern India, at the foot of the Himalayas, and in the Panjab, Rajputana, Malwa, Western India and the Central Provinces, the chief among them being the kings of Assam and Nepal and the republican tribes, Malavas, Arjunayanas, Yaudheyas, Prarjunas and Abhiras. Another series of allies is mentioned

including the Kushans, the Western Satraps and the Ceylonese and "all other dwellers in islands." This last expression has fired the imagination of some scholars, who speak of the co-operation of Samudragupta's navy with his army in his *digvijaya* and of the extension of his power to the islands of the Bay of Bengal and to the Malay Archipelago. His relations with Ceylon are confirmed by Chinese evidence, which mentions Meghavarna's embassy to him in order to obtain his permission for the building of a Sinhalese monastery at Bodhi Gaya. That king of Ceylon ruled from c 352 to c 379, and his synchronism with Samudragupta is an important chronological datum.

**His Accomplishments Again.** The third and last part of Harisena's *prasasti* reinforces Samudragupta's accomplishments by mentioning his "sharp and polished intellect," his musical talents, and his title of *laviraja* (king of poets) justified by his poetical works capable of securing the means of livelihood to learned men. Here we have the third reference to his eminence as a poet. Though none of his works are extant, it is improper to dismiss the three references to his literary achievement as baseless. His lyric coins, the best of his eight types confirm his proficiency in music. It is not necessary to interpret the term *laviraja* in its technical sense and regard him as superior to a *mahakavi* (a great poet) and as a polyglot. In the genealogical section of the record he is mentioned as "the daughter's son of Lichchhavi." Lastly Harisena, the author of this piece of poetic prose, is given his official designation of Mahadandanayaka and described as "the slave of the feet of the (Parama—) Bhattaraka" (Samudragupta). Though the conventional parts of the eulogy are worthless for historical purposes, the glorification and even deification of monarchy by Harisena cannot escape notice, the king was "a human being in so far as he conformed to the conventions of men, but in reality, he was a god residing in this world."

**Data of the Raghuvamsha.** Some scholars in their search for the historical nucleus which captured the imagination of Kalidasa in his account of Raghu's *digvijaya*, have arrived at discordant conclusions, while a few others think that the poet followed the Epics and the *Puranas*. In this

connection, the name of Samudragupta is prominently canvassed for the honour, though other suggestions are not wanting. There are some similarities between Harisena's expressions and those employed by Kalidasa, but it is far fetched to interpret the latter's phrase "*Asamudrakshutisanam*" as "kings from Samudra (gupta)". A large number of such phrases, picked up from the *Raghuvamśa* and other works of Kalidasa, may reasonably suggest, however, that the poet, when he dealt with the history of Raghu, had at the back of his mind at any rate, the martial achievements of the Guptas in general and those of Samudragupta in particular. This suggestion is further strengthened by the high probability that Kalidasa lived in the fifth century in the Gupta Empire.

**The Asvamedha Revived** Samudragupta's only other inscription at Eran, also without date, seems to have been indited after the successful termination of his wars and his performance of one or more horse sacrifices, indicative of his paramountcy. He issued coins of the *asvamedha* type with the legend 'restorer of the *asvamedha*,' and further there is a seal with the figure of a horse and the inscription 'Parakrama,' besides a stone horse at Lucknow. The records of his successors describe him as *chirotsanna svamedha hartu* or the restorer of the horse-sacrifice which had been in abeyance for a long time. Though South Indian kings performed horse sacrifices galore after Pushyamitra, the Gupta claim is not without foundation as far as Northern India is concerned. Some think that Samudragupta imitated the practice of South Indian princes. A number of titles assumed by him on his coins corroborate his martial career. As the first known date of his successor is 380, his death may be assigned to that year.

**Samudra's place in Gupta History** Samudragupta was the real founder of the Gupta Empire. Though it was confined to Northern India and much smaller than the Maurya Empire, his imperial influence was much greater than is indicated by his territorial possessions. He was a devout Vaishnava who stood for the harmony of creeds. He was the patron of the distinguished Buddhist Vasubandhu, and seems to have evinced interest in Buddhism. Moreover he should be credited with a share in the advancement of culture characteristic of his

dynasty he certainly laid the foundations of the Gupta cultural edifice as well

### SECTION III CHANDRAGUPTA II (c 380—c 415)

**Ramagupta** In the light of certain literary traditions Samudragupta is supposed to have been succeeded by Ramagupta. We have adverted to the story of the fatal end of the last Western Satrap. Without questioning Ramagupta's poltroonery and the chivalrous conduct of his younger brother Chandragupta II and of the latter's marriage with his brother's wife Dhruvadevi we may have critical misgivings regarding the enthronement of the former because of the omission of his name from the official genealogy and because he is unknown to numismatics. Therefore Chandragupta II may be regarded as the direct successor of his father who seems to have chosen him for the throne.

### Chandragupta's Conquest of Western India

Though the chronological limits of Chandragupta's reign are clearly indicated by the Mathura inscription (different from the old undated one) of Gupta era 61 =  $319 + 61 = \text{A.D. } 380$  and the Sanchi record of Gupta era 93 =  $\text{A.D. } 412$  his life is obscure. A dateless Udayagiri (Malwa) Cave inscription says that the emperor went there in person with a view to conquering the whole world. As a preliminary to his conquest of Western India he married his daughter Prabhavati by his second queen Kuberanaga to the Vakataka king Rudrasena II. The details of his obliteration of the Western Satrap principality under Rudrasimha III are unknown though his victory is vouched for positively by his inscriptions and coins and by later traditions and negatively by the cessation of Satrapal coins after 388. The conjectural date of the conquest is 390 though some suggest 409. Chandragupta II celebrated a horse sacrifice probably after his annexation of Western India, and a stone horse is found near Benares with the legend

Chandragu. His title of Vikramaditya was assumed probably in that connection and he is identified with the traditional Vikramaditya the destroyer of the Sakas (Western Satraps) and emperor of Ujjain. The incorporation of Western India in the Gupta Empire enormously enriched it by extending its limits to the Arabian Sea established direct over-sea



contact with the Roman Empire, and increased the commercial importance of Ujjain. But it is uncertain whether the great sea port of Broach belonged to the Gupta Empire, which stretched from the Himalayas to the Narmada and practically to the Mahanadi and from the mouth of the Hughli to the Jumna and the Chambal.

**The Capital** Though Pataliputra continued to be the capital of the Gupta Empire as in the reign of Samudragupta, Ujjain appears to have become the *de facto* head quarters of the emperor. Most of the inscriptions of Chandragupta are found in Malwa. Probably here lies the reason for Fa-hien's not mentioning the name of that emperor. Tradition associates Vikramaditya with both Ujjain and Pataliputra, even Ayodhya is referred to as the imperial capital. Inscriptions of the Kadambas emphasise their matrimonial connections with the Guptas, and Sanskrit Literature alludes to Vikramaditya's diplomatic relations with Kuntala through Kalidasa. Chandragupta's many coin types exhibit his numerous titles expressive of his valour. He must have died between 412 and 415 after a reign of more than thirty years.

**Fa-hien** The *apradaḥśhina* (from right to left) journey of Fa-hien, the Buddhist pilgrim, from Changan (China) to Northern India almost on foot, and thence by sea to Ceylon, Java and Ching Chon (China), is an important chapter in the annals of pious adventure. He spent fifteen years of his life (399-414) in travel, nine years in India, including six years in the Gupta Empire. He started from Central China, crossed the Gobi desert, passed through Khotan, Kashgar, Udyana, Gandhara, Afghanistan and the Panjab, and reached Mathura, having witnessed the prosperous state of Buddhism all along the route. He describes the condition of the Gangetic Doab, calls it the Middle Kingdom of the Brahmans, and portrays the character of the imperial administration. Continuing his journey, he visited Kanauj, Ayodhya, Sravasti, Kapilavastu, Kusinagara and Vaisali, and arrived at Pataliputra. He mentions the stone buildings of Asoka erected by 'spirits' and the hospitals of Magadha. Thence he proceeded to Rajagriha, Bodhi Gaya and Benares. Owing to the mountains and the insecurity of

Journey to  
India

the roads of the Dakhan, he returned to Pataliputra, where he stayed for three years studying Sanskrit and copying many Buddhist scriptures, including the *Vinayapitaka*, and thus carried out the main object of his journey to India. After the expiry of that period, he continued his travel, reached the sea port of Tamruk, and remained there for two years before leaving for Ceylon with copies of the Buddhist Canon and images and paintings.

**Historical Value of his Journal** The account of Fa hien's travel is full of miracles, demons, relics of the Buddha (his footprints, teeth, bowl, etc.), monks and nuns, and many strange things. He was primarily interested in Indian Buddhism, and looked at things through Buddhist spectacles. He was not interested in politics or administration directly. His general observations on Indian life are somewhat exaggerated and sometimes even untrue—the unqualified practice of *ahimsa*, the extreme purity of the people's lives from the point of view of their food and drink, and the use of cowrie shells as medium of exchange. Still he notes the decay of Buddhist holy places like Kapilavastu and Kusinagara, and his reference to the Middle Country as Brahman land is significant. Though his religion was vigorous and powerful in North Western India and beyond, in the Gangetic Valley its position was behind Brahmanism. Above all his observations on the Gupta administration are precious in so far as they are objective and relate to a subject about which nothing substantial is known from other sources.

#### SECTION IV KUMARAGUPTA I (c 415—c 455)

and

#### SKANDAGUPTA (c 455—c 467)

**Kumaragupta I** During the first half of the fifth century, the Gupta Empire enjoyed uninterrupted peace and tranquillity. The consolidation of it by Chandragupta II increased its prosperity and prestige and facilitated the task of his successor. Kumaragupta maintained intact his inherited position. His abundant coinage and the provenance of his inscriptions show that he controlled the whole empire firmly and wisely. He performed the horse-sacrifice and issued an appropriate coinage. He styled himself Mahendraditya. His

Vaishnavism did not prevent him from favouring the Skanda cult by his peacock coins and by naming his son Skanda a variant of his own name Kumara. His reign constitutes an epoch in cultural history. It is a good commentary on his imperial administration that a company of silk weavers immigrated into his dominions and became highly prosperous. This state of affairs was disturbed towards the close of his reign by the powerful and wealthy Pushyamitras a tribe belonging to the Narmada region who overpowered the imperial army sent against them. But Prince Skanda defeated them and rehabilitated the fortunes of his dynasty with some difficulty including personal discomforts.

**Skandagupta** The theory of succession disputes even during the pendency of the late war does not seem to be well founded. Skandagupta was the direct successor to his father who did not live to congratulate his victorious son. He was the last great Gupta of the imperial line who manfully struggled against the great external danger to the empire—the Huns—and removed it for the time being about 458. He commemorated his double victory by erecting a pillar at Bhitari near Benares crowned with a statue of Vishnu and inscribed with the story of the grand deliverance from the Pushyamitra and Hun perils. The debasement of his currency in certain respects must have been caused by the costliness of the Hunic war. His Girnār inscription mentions the breach of Lake Sudarsana in 455 and its repair in the following year by Chakrapalita the son of Governor Parnadatta (perhaps the Iranian Farnadata) in the short period of two months. He continued the enlightened attitude towards religion characteristic of his family.

## SECTION V THE DECLINE OF THE GUPTA EMPIRE

**Successors of Skandagupta** During the next ten years (c 467—c 477) the imperial throne was occupied by Puragupta, Narasimhagupta and Kumaragupta II. This period witnessed the empire's loss of Kathāwar and Western Malwa. Budhagupta ruled from about 477 to about 496 over the territory from Bengal to Eastern Malwa. He was followed by Tathagatagupta and Baladitya (probably identical with Bhanugupta). The Hun chief Toramana challenged the Gupta power and established his

authority in Malwa about 500. Two years later he was succeeded by his son Mihiragula. About 510 he was defeated by Baladitya who according to Huen Tsang, set him free at the instance of the Queen Mother. This victory over the Huns was completed about 535 by Yasodharman of Malwa. If Baladitya were the same as Bhanugupta, he must have reigned till about 545. But the rise of Yasodharman and of the Maukharis practically eclipsed the imperial line, which continued for some time more in Eastern India. Adityasena who revived the Gupta Empire in the 7th century after the death of Harsha, belonged to the dynasty of the Guptas of Magadha whose connection with the imperial Gupta family is a matter for conjecture.

**Causes of Decline** Even under the great Guptas imperial strength was impaired by the hostility of the Pushyamitras (bracketed with the Patumitras and Durmitras in the *Puranas*) and the Hunic hordes. Though Skandagupta's energy saved the empire for the moment, its evil day was only postponed. His successors were unfit to cope with the increasingly complicated situation resulting from the enterprise and ferocity of Mihiragula and his father. The foresight of Chandragupta II in concentrating on the Western front of the empire was not exhibited by his successors, some of whom vegetated at Pataliputra. A few scholars attribute the ultimate failure of the empire partly to the devotion of the last three kings to Buddhism. But their predecessors were not "accursed *Buddhists*". The Gupta monarchs sometimes modified the law of primogeniture into that of ultimogeniture, but such a change in succession at the reigning sovereign's discretion would not work well except under strong rulers of shrewd judgment. Coupled with royal polygamy such a system of succession to the throne would convert the palace into a bear garden in times of enthroned imbecility. The relations of the Guptas with the Vakatakas, regularised by Chandragupta II somehow became hostile in the troubled days of the Hun irruption. Lastly, the great hereditary officers of state and feudatories of the empire were so powerful that they easily converted their gubernatorial and subordinate status into a regal one in the years of imperial troubles and tribulations—Kithawar, Malwa, Kanauj and Benaul.

## SECTION VI ADMINISTRATION

**Inscriptional Data** We have mentioned the selection of the heir apparent by the king, the apotheosis of monarchy in Harisena's epigraph, and the hereditary character of some of the high offices of state. Civil and military offices were held by the same person. Harisena was *Sandhivigrahika* (Minister for Peace and War), *Kumaramatyā* (Junior Minister, but variously interpreted) and *Mahādandanayaka* (Commander in Chief), and his father had also been Commander in Chief. The existence of a ministerial council is vaguely implied in the Allahabad Pillar inscription, which refers to the delight of the *sabhyas* at the selection of Samudragupta for the throne. Provinces were called *Bhuktis* and *Desas* and Districts, *Vishayas* and *Pradesas*, Provincial Governors, *Uparikas*, (preferably princes) and *Goptris* and District Officers, *Vishayapatis*. There were numerous other officials as the *Nagara-Sreshthi* (President of the City Guild). The District was subdivided into villages governed by headmen. In some respects there was a falling off from the Mauryan standard.

• **Fa-hien** These dry bones of epigraphical data are made to live by Fa-hien's observations. "The people are prosperous and happy without registration or official restrictions. Only those who till the King's land have to pay so much on the profit they make. Those who want to go away, may go, those who want to stop, may stop. The King in his administration uses no corporal punishments, criminals are merely fined according to the gravity of their offences. Even for a second attempt at rebellion, the punishment is only the loss of the right hand. The men of the King's body guard have all fixed salaries." \* This is a picture of mild and benevolent administration, free from vexatious state interference in the individual's life. The observation regarding royal revenue seems to imply that cultivators other than the king's tenants had no land revenue to pay! In regard to the criminal law and absence of the passport regulations, the Mauryan government was very different. The Gupta administration was eminently efficient in keeping the roads safe for travellers as Fa-hien travelled without molestation throughout the Gangetic Valley.

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\* H. A. Giles, *The Travels of Fa-hien* (1923), pp. 20-21

## SECTION VII RELIGION

**Brahmanism** The triumph of the orthodox religion represented by Vedic ritualism Saivism and Vaishnavism is clear from the inscriptions and coins of the Guptas the literature of the period and the notes of Fa hien referring to the Gangetic Valley as the land of the Brahmans and to the neglect suffered by one or two of the holy places of Buddhism Most of the Guptas were Brahmanists specially devoted to Vaishnavism but then ministers and other officials belonged to various denominations The great dynasts of the sixth century followed a similar policy though Mihiragula in the ardency of his *Swabhakti* did not spare the Buddhists The worship of images and celebration of religious festivals gave a popular character to Brahmanism together with the composition of popular literature like the *Puranas* The absorption of the foreign elements in the population after the period of foreign rule into the Brahmanical society and the consequent social reorganisation contributed to the strength of Brahmanism and account for the energy it evinced during the Gupta period.

**Buddhism** Fa hien's description of the condition of Buddhism in Central Asia and North Western India testifies to its vigour and prosperity Though he was generally satisfied with its fortunes in the Gangetic plain he draws pointed attention to the unsatisfactory state of some great Buddhist centres Regarding Kapilavastu he remarks

Therein no king nor people are to be found, it is just like a wilderness except for the priests and some tens of families

The country of Kapilavastu is desolate and barren with very few inhabitants On the roads white elephants and lions are to be feared travellers must not be incautious In this city (Kusinagara) too the inhabitants are few and scattered and are only such as are connected with the priesthood He describes the city of Gaya as a complete waste within its walls But with reference to Bodhi Gaya he merely says that it is in a woody district Still there was no general decline of Buddhism perceptible to him A few Buddhist authors were patronised by the great Guptas The remains of a large number of monasteries and the predominance of Buddhist sculptures in the Sarnath Museum tend to con-

firm the impression of Fa-hien about the state of his religion in Northern India. No doubt the progress of Brahmanism must have reduced the comparative importance of Buddhism, but it was the Hun invasions that proved fatal to it in North-Western India by the destruction of the splendid monasteries which constituted the heart of Buddhism.

**Jainism.** The inconspicuousness and lack of ambition of Jainism largely saved it from the vicissitudes of fortune. Though overshadowed by both Brahmanism and Buddhism, it never crossed the path of the former, which in consequence was less hostile to Jainism than to Buddhism. The great Council of 454 was held at Valabhi, and the Jain Canon of the Svetambaras was committed to writing and many copies of it produced. The venue of the council shows the concentration of Jainism in Western India. In spite of its division into two sects, it flourished in South India as well where its decline commenced only in the seventh century.

#### SECTION VIII. ECONOMIC CONDITION

• Fa-hien's picture is an eloquent commentary on the economic condition of the Gupta Empire and on the part played by private initiative in the foundation of institutions for the alleviation of human suffering: "This (Magadha) has the largest cities and towns. Its people are rich and thriving

<b>General Prosperity</b>	and emulate one another in practising charity of heart and duty to one's neighbour...The elders and gentry of these countries have instituted in their capitals free hospitals and hither come all poor or helpless patients, orphans, widows and cripples. They are well taken care of; a doctor attends them, food and medicine being supplied according to their needs. They are all made quite comfortable, and when they are cured they go away."
<b>Free Hospitals</b>	

In mentioning cowries as medium of exchange, without any reference to the Gupta coins, Fa-hien records a half-truth. The cause of the general prosperity of the empire was the conduct of extensive trade with the West and the East, coupled with a vigorous industrial life at home, reflected in the literature of the period and, to some extent in inscriptions. The Mandasor Stone inscription of Kumaragupta I, composed by Vatsabhaddi of literary fame, says: "From Lata

deal in flesh' The assimilation of the status of women to that of Sudras was completed and their degradation ensured, and the *Puranas* were intended for the edification of those classes who had been declared incompetent to pursue the study of the fundamental religious texts The subjection of women was regularised, though they should be protected and generously treated, their rigorous subordination to the male sex was laid down, together with the wife's worship of even the husband with the whip hand. Manu who had declared the Aryan law in the previous period recommends wife beating in certain circumstances He was strongly opposed to *niyoga*, but would tolerate spinsterhood in case no suitable husband was available

### SECTION X. CULTURE

**"A Golden Age."** The Gupta period has been called "a golden age" and compared with the Periclean age of ancient Greece Some scholars speak of a Renaissance or rebirth of culture Though phenomenal intellectual progress was a distinctive feature of the age, the implication of the term rebirth is misleading We have seen that the Indian mind was not struck with sterility in the previous epoch of foreign domination, the foreign rulers, far from being inimical to Indian culture, speedily imbibed it and promoted its fortunes Therefore the Gupta period is to be characterised as one of "florescence" rather than of "renascence" There was a great religious and cultural revival which influenced the parts of India not included in the Gupta Empire and even the Hindu colonies across the seas In the previous epochs there had been substantial imperial, commercial and artistic activity, but they had not displayed so much literary and scientific energy as the Gupta period, which is characterised by progress in all directions The decline of the empire did not mean the decline of cultural progress, and the intellectual power it had liberated flowed continuously in spite of the empire's suspended animation in the sixth century.

**Language and Script** The Gupta age witnessed the dominance of Sanskrit which had become the language of Mahayanism as well The Nagari script was being evolved from Brahmi, and the Gupta alphabet came into existence.



Pali was employed by the Sinhalese Buddhists and other Hinayanists and the Jains confined themselves to Prakrit for religious purposes. The literary output of the age was so great as to incline scholars to describe it as one of general literary impulse.

**Literature** The greatness of Kalidasa was recognised by Goethe and his masterpiece the *Sakuntala* is among the hundred best books of the world. His humility in calling himself a *manda* (dullard) and a pigmy has probably been responsible for the tradition which represents him as a good for nothing fellow who attained greatness owing to Goddess Kali's intervention and benediction. On the other hand his works prove his extensive learning. The story that he was the contemporary of eight other jewels is unreliable though he is generally regarded as the protégé of Vikramaditya. He was a *Snabhakta* with Vedantic leanings a cultured man of aristocratic disposition. His close association with Ujjain is clear. His dramas are the *Sakuntala*, the *Malavikagnimitra* and the *Vikramorjasi*; his epics the *Raghuvamśa* and the *Kumarasambhava*; his lyrics the *Meghaduta* or *Meghasandesa* (the model for *sandeshalavyas*) and the *Ritusamhara* (attributed to him by some scholars with unnecessary hesitation). Many other productions have been fathered upon him without sufficient grounds. He is the greatest poet and playwright in Sanskrit Literature. He is generally assigned to the first half of the fifth century and his influence on the Vatsabhatti inscription of 472-3 is evident.

The *Mudrarakshasa* of Visakhadatta belongs to the early fifth century though some would assign it to the sixth century and even later. It is a play with a hero—Kautilya—but without a heroine. Devotion to the king takes the place of the usual love element and politics is dominant throughout. Kautilya who is regarded as a *Duratma* (a wicked fellow) by his bitterest enemy Rakshasa is towards the end of the play recognised by the latter as a *Mahatma* (a noble soul) because of the astonishing success of his statecraft. Visakhadatta has been called the Indian Corneille. His other drama the

*Devichandraguptam*, is known only from extracts quoted by another author

The great admiration felt for Sudraka, the author of the  
**Sudraka** *Mrichchhakatika*, has been lessened by the discovery of Bhasa's *Charudatta*, though some would regard the latter as a stage adaptation of the former. It is the story of a rich Brahman Charudatta who loves the noble courtesan Vasantasena and is loved by her even after his faulty generosity has reduced him to penury. 'It is pre eminent among Indian plays for the distinctively dramatic qualities of vigour, life and action, as well as skill in the delineation of character.'\* It combines serious and comic situations and gives us a good idea of the social life of its age. Its "un Indian" characteristics are emphasised by those who support the theory of Greek influence on the Sanskrit drama.

The theme of Bharavi's *Kiratarjuniya*, a *mahakavya* assigned to the sixth century, is the conflict of Arjuna with  
**Bharavi** Siva. Its merit consists in its descriptions of Nature approaching the excellence of Kalidasa. It contains verbal jugglery of various kinds appreciated by Indian critics.

Dandin and Subandhu belong to the sixth century, though some would place them in the following century. Dandin's  
**Dandin and Subandhu** *Kavyadarsa* deals with poetics, and his *Dasa kumaracharita*, with the adventures of ten princes in well adorned prose. The latter work is a romance, emphasising the love element and introducing us to rogues, vagabonds, thieves, gamblers and courtesans, its value for social life is indeed great. The *Vasavadatta* of Subandhu is another romance full of descriptions, long compounds and puns. It is the story of a prince and a princess loving each other in a dream, of their meeting with the help of two parrots, of their flight on a magic horse, and of the princess becoming a stone and subsequently regaining her original form. It constitutes no easy reading.

The *Panchatantra* is a great treasure house of stories intended for the instruction and edification of the young, but

that originally it was a book to teach politics to princes is sufficiently clear from the researches of Prof. Edgerton. **The Panchatantra** It is to be assigned to the period, 300—500. Its Brahmanical character has been established, the theory of its Buddhist origin is untenable. It is the parent of the *Hutopadesa* compiled after 1000. It has been translated into many languages, Indian and foreign. 'Probably no book except the Bible has been translated into so many languages, certainly no secular book.' Its influence on the fable literature of the world is astonishing. Boccaccio and Chaucer were indebted to it. 'The story of the migration of Indian fairy tales from East to West is more wonderful and instructive than many of those fairy tales themselves.' †

The Buddhist Amarasimha's *Namalinganusasana*, usually called the *Amarakosa* or the lexicon of Amara, is devoted to the synonyms of personal and common names, in three chapters, divided into sections and arranged, after careful analysis from the point of view of the intrinsic connection of words with other words. **Amara-simha** Roget's *Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases* among modern dictionaries, being the nearest approximation to it. It gives the gender of names by a skilful means conducive to brevity, and a section deals with homonyms and another with indeclinables. That its author was a Buddhist is known, not from his vocabulary which is not specially Buddhist, but from his enumeration quite at the beginning of the various names of the Buddha before those of the Brahmanical gods are dealt with. Of the numerous commentaries on the lexicon, the recently published *Tilakaratnam* is one of the best extant.

The *Dharmasastras* of Manu and Yajñavalkya have been assigned to the previous period. Though closely modelled on that of Manu the treatises of Narada and Brihaspati are more developed from the point of view of law. **Dharmasastras and Puranas** The list of works of this class given by Mr P. V. Kane in his *History of the Dharmasastra* is astonishing in its length. The *Puranas*, originally dynastic annals, were modified and extended through the ages.

\* Macdonell, *op cit*, p. 123

† *Ibid*

until some of them obtained their present shape in the Gupta age. They were finally transformed into religious works devoted to the glorification of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, and became saturated with sectarianism. There are 18 *Puranas*, besides *Upapuranas*. Though they have contributed to mass education and religious instruction, their extravagances and superstitions can never conduce to the enrichment of the intellect or to balanced judgment. The most popular of the *Puranas* is the *Bhagavata Purana*, inculcating *bhakti* in Krishna, regarded as an incarnation of Vishnu, but the *Vishnu Purana* was raised to canonical rank by Ramanujā. The *Vayu*, *Matsya* (both devoted to Siva) and *Vishnu Puranas* belong to the Gupta period, and are assigned to about 350, 400 and 500 respectively. The *Markandeya Purana* (devoted to Brahma), regarded as the most ancient from the point of view of its contents, makes Indra and Brahma supreme.

**Philosophy.** The Mimamsaka Sabara belongs to this age, and his *Bhashya* is the earliest existing commentary on the *Puramimamsa Sutras* of Jaimini. His work was differently interpreted later, and two schools of *Mimamsa* developed. Though the *Sankhya Sutras* are regarded as belonging to the fifteenth century, the *Sankhya kṛitika* of Isvara Krishna was produced in the fourth century, and has been described by modern critics as "the pearl of the whole scholastic literature of India." The *Nyaya Bhashya* of Vatsyayana (different from the author of the *Kama Sutra*) is assigned to about 350, and Uddyotakara commented on it. The *Yoga Bhashya* of "Vyasa" may be dated about 500.

The great Buddhist works of the period are in Sanskrit, except those of Buddhaghosha who lived in the fifth century and of Mahanama the author of the *Mahavamsa*, the famous history of Ceylon, who flourished in the sixth century, both of whom wrote in Pali. Buddha ghosha belonged to Magadha, studied Buddhism in Ceylon, and gained fame as a commentator on the *Tripitaka* and as the author of the *Visuddhimagga*, a philosophical work.

We have alluded to Vasubandhu's connection with Samudragupta. He was the younger brother of Asanga, the founder of the *Yogachara* school of Buddhist philosophy—a philosophic movement as powerful and of as widespread influence as that of Plato and Aristotle. He developed that doctrine of idealism and his *Abhidharmakosa* deals with Metaphysics, Psychology and Ethics; he also commented on the *Mahayana Sutras*. Dignaga, the reputed logician and a disciple of Vasubandhu, was the dialectician of the *Yogachara* school, and his logic is comparable to that of Aristotle in its originality and in the fact that it spread over the whole eastern half of Asia. Some scholars regard him as the author of the *Kundamala*, a Sanskrit drama anticipating in some respects the *Uttararamacharita* of Bhavabhuti. The Buddhist writers of this period were saturated with the true philosophic spirit and their intellectual fecundity is astonishing.

**Science** Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts on medicine have been recovered from Chinese Turkistan and are assigned to the fourth or fifth century. The *Vridhha Vagbhata*, the third of the medical trio, lived in the sixth century according to some scholars, and was a Buddhist. The contents of his *Ashtangasangraha* (Summary of the Eight Sections of Medicine) are mentioned by I-tsing; he acknowledges his indebtedness to Charaka and Susruta.

The five *Siddhantas* (the *Surya*, *Pitamaha*, *Varishta*, *Paulisa* and *Romaka* systems of astronomy) of which only the first is extant exhibiting varying degrees of Greek influence—and two of them are named after Paul and Rome (Alexandria)—, were probably compiled in the fourth century. The *Romaka Siddhanta* showing the maximum of Western influence, corrects Greek doctrines from the Indian point of view; there are fundamental differences between the foreign and indigenous systems. The work of Aryabhata, called *Aryabhatiya*, written in 499, deals with Mathematics and Astronomy and follows the *Surya Siddhanta*; it mentions the diurnal revolution of the earth on its axis—a view rejected later by Varahamihira and

other astronomers—, explains solar and lunar eclipses scientifically, and gives the correct ratio of the diameter to the circumference. Varahamihira lived in the sixth century and composed in 505 the *Panchasiddhantika*, which gives an account of the five astronomical systems. In Astrology his works superseded their predecessors and secured to him the foremost place in that subject. His *Bṛihat Samhita*, in 106 chapters, is a great work in Sanskrit Literature, a veritable encyclopædia of ancient Indian learning and superstition, dealing with astronomy, astrology, geography, weather, animals, women, marriage, the harem, omens, etc. It contains a noble vindication of women against the attacks of misogynists, and the advocacy of their cause by Varahamihira is admirably modern. Horoscopy was chiefly an importation from West, unknown to earlier Indian writers, especially Kautilya who had no idea of planetary influences on human life. The very word *hora* was borrowed and cleverly explained as short for *ahoratra* (day and night). Varahamihira's *Bṛhatsamhita*, treating of *Horasāstra* or predictive Astrology, is the standard work on the subject, and an abridgement of it is the *Laghu-jātaka*. Therefore the prediction of a man's future on the basis of planetary positions at the time of his birth is largely of foreign origin, though natural Astrology developed in India from the Vedic age.

**Art** The Hun and Muslim invasions of India have almost completely destroyed the architecture of the age to which belong the earliest stone buildings extant. The temple at Deogarh, near Jhansi contains a good specimen of Siva's image in ascetic dress. The sculptures in the temple at Garhwa, near Allahabad continue the tradition of Bharhut and Sanchi without any influence of the Gandhara school. The Sarnath excavations have brought to light a seated Buddha statue characteristic of the Gupta style, while the standing Buddha at Mathura exhibits a little Greek influence. His gigantic copper statue found at Sultanganj, near Bhagalpur, now in the Birmingham Museum, about 7½ feet high and nearly a ton in weight, and the Delhi Iron Pillar of Chandra, 23 feet 8 inches in height and 164 inches in diameter at the base and

•  
Architecture  
and  
Sculpture

12 05 inches at the top, show the wonderful progress of metal-lurgy. The pillar is still free from rust though completely exposed to the weather for so many centuries. "It is" not many years since the production of such a pillar would have been an impossibility in the largest foundries of the world, and even now there are comparatively few where a similar mass of metal could be turned out (Ball)\*. The Bhitari monolithic pillar of Skandagupta and other columns are noteworthy. Gupta sculpture is remarkable for its 'freshness and vitality'. Differing from some art critics, Dr. Smith regards Gupta art as "Hindu art at its best," and his judgment is based on the following analysis. The physical beauty of the figures, the gracious dignity of their attitude, and the refined restraint of the treatment are qualities not to be found elsewhere in Indian sculpture in the same degree"†.

The paintings of the age exist at Bagh, Ajanta and Sigiriya, and the first place alone was within the Gupta Empire. The second, included in the Vakataka dominions, was exposed to the political and cultural influence of that empire. The last

**Painting** in Ceylon, came under the artistic sovereignty of Ajanta. The frescoes of Ajanta mostly illustrate the life of the Buddha as depicted in Buddhist literature. Caves XVI and XVII are assigned to about 500. The Dying Princess is incomparable for its pathos, the wheel of life is quite ordinary. Cave XIX contains good sculpture and numerous painted figures of the Buddha. The paintings represent the best achievement of India in their line, and "excite respectful admiration as the production of painters capable of deep emotion, full of sympathy with the nature of men, women, children, animals and plants, and endowed with masterly powers of execution."‡ The Bagh caves (Gwalior State) contain "paintings of high merit and infinite variety,"§ which conform to the standard of excellence attained at Ajanta. At Sigiriya the frescoes depict ladies carrying flowers to the Buddhist temple and belong to the close of the fifth century, but they do not come up to the level of the finest at Ajanta. Almost all that belongs to the common

\* Smith, *Fine Art* p. 83

† Smith *Oxford History*, p. 162

‡ Smith, *Fine Art* p. 100

§ *Ibid* p. 103

spiritual consciousness of Asia is of Indian origin in the Gupta period \*

**Coinage Samudragupta** Samudragupta issued eight types of gold coinage (1) The *dhvaja* or Standard type imitates the Kushan dress and standing posture though Siva's trident is replaced by the *garudadhvaja* Vishnu's emblem (2) The Archer type was the coin continued by many of his successors (3) The Battle axe type substitutes the battle axe for the Standard (4) The Kacha type introduces the figure of Lakshmi (5) The Tiger slayer type exhibits him in Indian dress slaying a tiger (6) The Chandragupta I type struck to commemorate his father's marriage has on the obverse the names Chandragupta and Kumaradevi and on the reverse Lichchhavyah (7) The *Asvamedha* type with the figure of the horse celebrates his great achievement (8) The Lyrical type depicts him in Indian dress sitting cross legged using the  *vina* on the obverse and Lakshmi on the reverse The excellent modelling of the king's figure the skilful delineation of the features the careful attention to details and the general ornateness of the design in the best specimens constitute this type as the highest expression of Gupta numismatic art † The coin legends emphasise his valour and invincibility and describe the conquest of the world as the door to heaven The *Asvamedha* type adds the expression restorer of the *Asvamedha*

**Chandragupta II** Chandragupta II continued the Archer and Tiger slayer gold coins of his father replacing in the latter case the tiger by the lion A unique coin represents him as fighting with the lion He introduced the *Chhatra* (umbrella) and horseman types Consequent on his conquest of Western India he issued a silver coinage for local circulation changing the Western Satrapal type only to the extent of introducing the Garuda or Vishnu's bird and the Gupta era He devised nine types of copper coins on most of which the Garuda is found on the reverse one of these types has Chandra on the obverse

**Kumargupta I** Besides imitating Samudragupta's *Asvamedha* type and some of the types of his own father

\* A. K. Coomaraswamy *op cit.*, p. 91

† Brown *op cit.* p. 43



Kumaragupta introduced the Peacock type (on the obverse, the king standing and feeding a peacock, and on the reverse, God Kumara on a peacock), and the Elephant rider\* and *Pratapa* types. He struck silver coins with the figure of a peacock for the central part of his empire and continued the Garuda type in Western India. Only a few of his copper coins are extant.

**Skandagupta** Skandagupta's gold coins are scarce and of only two types. He changed the Kushan standard of weight and made his coins heavier, but the purity of the metal was impaired. He continued his father's Garuda and Peacock types of silver coins and added two new types—one with Siva's bull and another with an altar.

**Foreign Influence** Besides the foreign influences so far noticed, there is found on the obverse of the Archer and other similar types the king's name shortened—Samudra Chandra etc,—and inscribed vertically, a characteristic of later Kushan coins derived from China. Yet "the splendid gold coinage of the Guptas, with its many types and infinite varieties and its inscriptions in Classical Sanskrit, now appearing on Indian coins for the first time, are the finest examples of purely Indian art of this kind we possess."\* The Gupta gold coins were imitated by Sasanka, the silver coins by the Maukharys and Toramana, perhaps by Harsha as well, and the copper coins by Toramana and Mihiragula.

**Causes of Cultural Progress** The phenomenal intellectual and artistic activity of the Gupta age was the culmination of Indian effort in the previous periods. Viewed in this light, an explanation of it is less difficult than when it is regarded as a sudden development following a supposed cultural interregnum or anarchy. Though golden ages are generally difficult to explain as, like genius, they are not governed by laws, a few factors contributing to their glory may be mentioned. The peace and vast resources of the Gupta Empire must have enabled its sovereigns to give a fillip to cultural progress, and we know that a few of them at any rate were themselves distinguished men of varied accomplishments, capable of discriminate patronage of learning and

technical skill We have seen that Samudragupta was an extraordinary combination of energy and erudition Chandragupta II, identifiable with the traditional Vikramaditya, must have been a great patron of letters, though the juxtaposition of *navaratnas* or nine gems is discredited, as in the much later case of the *ashtadiggajas* or 'eight elephants' of Krishnadeva Raya of Vijayanagar On one type of his coins, Chandragupta II is entitled *Rupakrit* meaning a dramatist(?) or a painter Besides appreciating art and letters the Guptas were sympathetic towards Buddhism and hence the Buddhist sculptures and paintings of their age The revival of Brahmanism must be reckoned as another driving force Though foreign contact was not a main factor, it provided scope for improvement in some directions

## SECTION XI FOREIGN INFLUENCE ON INDIAN CULTURE

We have already given much attention to this question, except in the vague case of early Babylonian influence in connection with Iranian and Greek contacts with India We may now review the Hellenistic contribution to Indian

**Hellenistic** civilisation, pursue the Iranian influences further, and consider the possibility of Christian inspiration in the field of religion The theory of the unreceptiveness of India for Hellenism has been seen to be untenable in the realms of coinage, Astronomy and Astrology and fine art Predictive Astrology as expounded by Varahamihira exhibits the maximum influence of the West Besides technical terms and some names of the zodiacal signs there was substantial borrowing The *Gargi Samhita* belonging to the previous period speaks of the Greeks as worthy of honour like *Rishis* for their knowledge of Astronomy and Astrology, though they were *mlechchhas* or barbarians In the religious sphere the use of images may be attributed to Greek influence The assumption of the indebtedness of the Sanskrit drama to the Greeks is based on the absence of dramatic literature in India before the Greek conquest in the second century B C But the word *natika* and other allied terms are derived from the Prakrit *nat* and the Sanskrit *nr̥it*, and the origin of the Sanskrit drama may be adequately explained with reference to the epic antecedents As

**Sanskrit  
Drama**

against the *Yatani* (curtain on the stage), the *Yatani* or Greek made recognition marks and scenes, and the really dramatic and other un-Indian features of the *Mṛcchakatika* we have to reckon with the following characteristics of a typical Sanskrit play: the large number of characters, sometimes even thirty, as in the *Sakuntala*; weak development of the plot; disregard of the three Aristotelian unities of time, place and action; mixture of prose and verse, and use of different Prakritic dialects. The absence of tragedies in Sanskrit Literature shows that even the best performances of the Greeks in drama did not influence that Literature. The humoral theory is a very old Indian theory, related to the three *gunas* or qualities of the Sankhya system, and may be regarded as India's gift to Greece whatever may be its value from the

**Medicine** modern point of view, besides many medicinal plants. In the sphere of medicine, ancient

India led, rather than followed, other countries. No real case has been made out for Indian indebtedness to Alexandrian Mathematics, on the other hand, the rest of the world received the numerical figures and the decimal system from

**Mathematics** this country, which attained an eminence in Algebra beyond the reach of the Greeks. But a few scholars argue that, during the best period of ancient Indian Mathematics, 400—650 there was commercial intercourse with Alexandria and that Hindu Mathematicians deal only with the subjects handled by Alexandrian scholars and advance no positive claim to originality. But the general opinion of competent authorities is that ancient India was original and great in the field of Mathematics. Though Greek contact with India was continuous from the Maurya down to the Gupta period it was commercial mostly, and

**Limited Greek Influence** during the second and first centuries B.C. Greek rule prevailed in North Western India. Regard being had to the duration of the contact and its political character for two centuries and to

the fact that the Greeks and the Hindus were the two most intellectual peoples of the ancient world, it is surprising that Hellenism should not have played a more important part in India. The fact of the matter is that, like the Greeks, the Hindus were not averse to borrowing from peoples who had

something really good to give, and when they borrowed discriminately, they assimilated the foreign element in an admirable manner so much so that in some cases the proof of indebtedness is difficult to elucidate. There is no doubt that the contact of the Greeks with India revolutionised her coin age, enriched her astronomy, and improved her art.

"If the childhood of Buddhism was Indian, it grew to adolescence in a motley bazaar where Persians and their ways were familiar." To some extent Iranian influence on Mahayanaism is unmistakable: the ideal of charity and active morality, the figures of the Bodhisattvas, the conception of paradise etc. Though Sun worship is as old as the Vedas the Iranian form of it was introduced into India in the early centuries of the Christian era. Harsha describes his father, grandfather and great grandfather as *paramaditya bhaktas* (great devotees of the Sun), and their cult was the Magian cult of the Sun. Images of the Sun god were worshipped in special temples.

The doctrine of *bhakti* or devotion to God has been attributed by some to Christian influence but we have seen in the pre-Christian centuries the growth in India of that doctrine, which may be traced back to the time of Panini in the seventh or sixth century B.C. The resemblances between the legends of Christ and Krishna are pointed out, but the late development of the story of Krishna should not obscure the indigenous origin and growth of Indian *bhakti*. Christian doctrines like the love of God and salvation by faith had developed in this country before the birth of Christ. There is no trace in ancient Indian literature of the fundamental doctrine of Christianity that Christ died for the salvation of the world. Further, Christianity during this period was confined to a few localities (North Western India, Malabar Coast and Mylapore, Madras) which were not at all powerful to influence the religion of the country as a whole. Moreover, similarities of beliefs and practices may be explained by Indian antecedents.

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\* Sir Charles Elliot: *Hinduism and Buddhism* (1931) III, p. 451

## SECTION XII INDIAN INFLUENCE ON WESTERN THOUGHT

We have seen that from the 6th century B C at any rate India was in close contact with the West and that in the 3rd century B C Asoka sent Buddhist missions to Western Asia Africa and Europe The activity of Indian trade with Rome during the early centuries of the Christian era continued in the Gupta period In the wake of this intercourse Indian

**Pythagoras** ideas flowed to the West Pythagoras who lived about 500 B C organised societies the members of which lived together and practised self restraint if not asceticism of the Indian type and believed in metempsychosis and other Indian doctrines opposed to the Hellenic bent of

**Plato** mind Plato (429—347 B C) the great Athenian philosopher disciple of Socrates and guru of Aristotle was non Hellenic in some respects and believed in metempsychosis Megasthenes says that Indian philosophers discoursed like Plato about the immortality of the soul Though

**Buddhist  
Christian  
Parallels** the similarities between Buddhist and Christian religious texts have been exaggerated by a few scholars some striking parallels (such as the prediction of the future greatness of the babies the

Buddha and Christ then temptation their walking on water their feeding many people with a small quantity of food and above all the cessation of the activity of man and nature at the moment of their birth) show that Buddhist Literature was well known to Christian authors Many monastic practices are common to Buddhism and Christianity three of them—celibacy of the clergy confession and veneration of relics—are so characteristic of early Buddhism and new to Christianity that the latter must have borrowed them from the former in the third and fourth centuries A D Finally in the Middle Ages the

**Bardesanes** Buddha became a Catholic saint under the name of Josaphat a corruption of *Bodhisat* Indian influence was even greater on non orthodox Christianity Gnosticism emphasises *Gnosis* (knowledge of God) and corresponds to our *gnanamarga* Bardesanes the Gnostic (155—233 A D) wrote on

**Basilides** Indian religion and taught a kind of *karma* doctrine Basilides regarded God as devoid of qualities—our conception of *Nirguna Brahman* Though Mani (215—276)

the founder of Manichaeism, was an eclectic, he insisted upon asceticism, *ahimsa* and celibacy, the members of his Order practised these virtues and lived on public charity. Above all, Plotinus (203-262) a non-Christian and the founder of Neo-Platonism, was thoroughly Indian in spirit. His highest principle is God, 'beyond good and evil', he emphasises fasting, meditation and avoidance of pleasure, he regards union with God as the true happiness. The world is unreal and can be treated only as a halting place on the road to God; after death, happiness is attained by the merging of the individual soul in the universal soul. We have referred to the migrations of the *Panchatantra*. The numerical figures and the decimal system constitute our basic gift not only to the West but to the whole world, though a few disputes this verdict. Charaka and Susruta through the medium of the Arabs dominated European medicine during the Middle Ages and down to the seventeenth century. The formation of artificial noses was learnt by English doctors from India in eighteenth century. Kalidasa's *Sakuntala* influenced the Prologue to Goethe's *Faust*, and his *Meghaduta*, a passage in Schiller's *Maria Stuart*, and Indian philosophy. Emerson, the American essayist and philosopher from Pythagoras and Plato to Shelley and Wordsworth the direct or indirect influence, to a very limited extent, of India on Western thought may be traced\*.

### SECTION XIII THE HUNS IN INDIA

The nomadic Huns who devastated Europe from 375 to the death of Attila in 453 constituted one branch migrating from Central Asia in search of fresh lands and pastures new. Another branch called the White Huns occupied the Oxus Valley and had succeeded by 484 in crushing the opposition of the Sassanians under Firoz (459-81) who lost his life in the effort. While the conquest of Persia was going on, India was invaded. We have followed the vicissitudes of their fortune during Sandagupta's reign and after his death. Their initial

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\* (1) Gervill (1911) *The Legacy of India* (1937) pp. 1-37.

failure was wiped off by their subsequent success about 500 under Toramana who, after the conquest of Malwa styled himself *Maharajadhiraja*. This triumph was partly due to the final failure of Persia to stem the tide of Hun invasion in 484 and the consequent increase in the number of Indian invaders to their barbarian strength and ferocity, and to the weakness of the Gupta Empire after the death of Skandagupta about 467. In 502 Mihiragula stepped into his father's place and ruled over his Indian possessions from Sagala. The Asiatic Empire of the Huns outside India extended from Persia to Khotan including both and was powerful enough to induce the Chinese Emperor to send Song Yun to its capital in 519 and Mihiragula seems to have been feudatory to that empire. He received the Chinese envoy in 520 in Gandhara, which was a part of his dominions. He was defeated probably twice in Malwa in 510 and 533. His second and final defeat was followed by the usurpation of his throne at Sagala by his younger brother. He was consequently obliged to seek the hospitality of Kashmir. But soon he turned against his host, seized the throne of Kashmir, invaded Gandhara, butchered the people, violently persecuted the Buddhists and destroyed their monuments. He died at last probably in 542. The Christian monk mariner, Cosmas Indicopleustes, in his *Christian Topography*, written in 547, mentions Gollas (Mihiragula) as lord of India, refers to his fiscal oppression and tyranny, and says that his army was so large as to have drunk dry the ditch surrounding a besieged city. But the date to which this reference belongs is not known. Mihiragula was a fiend in human shape, and has been called the *Attila of India*. His head exhibited on his coins—the type is copied from Gupta Persian and Kushan coins but the legend is in Nagari script—"is coarse and brutal to the last degree." There is a Kashmirian story of his pastime of torturing elephants by throwing them down from hill tops. Huen Tsang notes that 'his career was cut short by his sudden death, and the air was darkened, and the earth quaked, and fierce winds rushed forth as he went to the Hell of unceasing torment.'

**Causes of Hun Failure** The causes of the ultimate failure of the Huns in India must be sought for in the atrocities of the invaders and in the unbearable tyranny of Mihiragula. The Hun power in Persia was overthrown during 503—18, and by Noshirwan the Just, the most illustrious member of the Sassanian dynasty, in 565, who, with the help of the Turks invaded the home of the Huns in the Oxus Valley, killed their king and divided the latter's territory between himself and his ally. Hence there was no fresh immigration of the barbarians into India. Many Indian rulers followed an anti-Hunic policy like Baladityagupta, Yasodharman of Malwa, the Maukharis of Kanauj and the Pushyabhutis of Thanesar.

**Effects of Their Invasions** Further, the ferocious tribes were tamed by their contact with an old civilisation and became rapidly Hinduised. The effects of the domination of the Huns in India were substantial. They ruined the Gupta Empire and Buddhism in North Western India and their tyrannical rule provoked opposition fatal to it. Ultimately, they became merged in the Indian population and contributed to the rise of many Rajput dynasties.

#### SECTION XIV. YASODHARMAN OF MALWA

Yasodharman is known to us from two inscriptions—the Mandasor (Gwalior State) Pillar inscription (a copy of which is inscribed on another pillar near it) and the Stone inscription, in the same place of Yasodharman and Vishnuvardhana, dated 589 (Malwa or Vikrama era) expired = 533 A. D. This is his only known date and he is supposed to have reigned for twenty five to fifty years. Both records were incised by one Govinda. The Pillar (probably a *ranastambha* or pillar erected on the battle field) inscription describes Yasodharman as a

**The Pillar Inscription** *samrat* or universal sovereign who, dissatisfied with the limited territories of his family, conquered the whole country from the Lauhitya (Brahmaputra) to the foot of Mount Mahendra full of palmyra trees and from the Himalayas to the Western Ocean, and made his dominions more extensive than those of the Guptas or the Huns. It records that King Mihiragula, master of the Himalayan region who recognised only God Siva as his superior, was forced to submit to Yasodharman,



whose character is portrayed in glowing colours. He was the abode of religion and the upholder of good customs. He laboured for the benefit of mankind and saved the world from proud and cruel rulers who transgressed the path of good conduct and were destitute of virtuous delights. He was

**The Stone Inscription** a virtuous sovereign with a praiseworthy ancestry and comparable to Manu and Bharata. The second record mentions Yasodharman as a

*janendra* and as the *naradhipati* (lord of men) Vishnuvardhana who raised his family with the *aulikara* (Sun—?) crest to pre-eminence and who, by conquering many kings of the East and North, obtained the titles of *Rajadhiraja* and *Paramesvara*. His minister was Dharmadasha who worked against any intermixture of castes. There is

**Their Historical Value** nothing *prima facie* improbable in the imperial claims advanced by Yasodharman. His decisive defeat of the Hun chief, though distrusted by some, is founded on the evidence of a contemporaneous inscription and can be reconciled with the statement of Hsuen Tsang attributing the achievement to Baladityagupta by the reasonable supposition of an earlier and a later victory. Dr. Hoernle regards Yasodharman as the traditional Vikramaditya of Ujjain and patron of Kalidasa, but this view is generally rejected. Dr. K. P. Jajawal identifies him with the Kalki of the *Puranas*, called Vishnuvasa, who exterminated the Huns, destroyed irreligious people and enemies of the *Dharma*, made extensive conquests and was the benefactor of the country for twenty-five years. Therefore it is difficult to minimise the supreme importance of Yasodharman in the political, religious and social history of India. He fills the gap in imperial history between the Guptas and Harsha.

## SECTION XV THE MAUKHARIS OF KANAUJ

The founder of the Maukharī dynasty Harivarman was followed by Adityavarman, who married the daughter of Krishna Gupta, the first member of the Gupta dynasty of Magadha. After the third ruler Isvaravarman came Isanavarman, who claims to have conquered the Andhras (Vishnukundins under Madhavavarman I), the Subhas (Chalukyas) and the Gaudas (Bengalis). He assumed the title of

*Maharajadhiraja* and though he defeated the Huns as well, he was finally overpowered by Kumara Gupta, the fourth Gupta of Magadha. He must have lived about 554. His son and successor, Sarvasvarman, inflicted a decisive defeat on Dīmodara Gupta (the fifth Gupta of Magadha) and the Huns. A later inscription (612) on the banks of the Sutlej refers to a grant of land made by Sarvasvarman to a local temple, and this record confirms his victory over the Huns. He was the greatest Maukharī whose authority extended from Bengal to the Sutlej and the Vindhya. The next ruler, Avantivarman, is regarded by some as the king mentioned, according to one reading in the *Bharataṭīya* (concluding benedictory stanza) of the *Mudrarakāśha*, but its author Viśakhadatta is better assigned to the fifth century. His relationship to his immediate predecessor is not known. His son and successor Grahavarman married about 602 Rajyasri, the daughter of Prabhakara-Varādhana of Thanesar, but after his father-in-law's death was attacked and killed by Deva Gupta in league with Sasanka of Bengal. Rajyasri was imprisoned, and the duty of revenge was performed by her brothers Rajyavardhana and Harshavardhana, the latter stepping into the place of the last Maukharī, Grahavarman. The chronology of the Maukharis is exceedingly obscure,<sup>2</sup> and their ascendancy during the latter half of the sixth century must be attributed to the death of Yasodharman of Malwa and to their attempt to keep the Huns at bay in the North West who, though weakened by Mihiragula's death were sufficiently strong to be a disturbing element. They were stout champions of Brahmanism, performing sacrifices and encouraging Vedic studies. They imitated the Peacock type of Gupta silver coins and used the Gupta era. Above all, they played a prominent part in crossing the path of the Guptas of Magadha towards empire and in preventing trouble from the Huns and finally paved the way for the ascendancy of the Pushyabhutis of Thanesar under Prabhakara-Varādhana and his sons.

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\* T. G. Aravamudan *The Later the Maukharis and the Sangam Age* (1925) p. 105

## SECTION XVI THE GUPTAS OF MAGADHA

The genealogy of the Gupta dynasty of Magadha is mostly derived from the lengthy Aihud (near Gaya) inscription of Adityasena whose Shalipur (near Patna) record is dated 66 Harsha era =  $606 + 66 = 672$  A. D. The relationship of this line of Guptas to the imperial line is doubtful as no such claims redounding to their prestige are advanced by the former. The founder of the dynasty, Krishna Gupta, was followed by Harsha Gupta and Jivita Gupta I. The fourth ruler, Kumara Gupta, was contemporaneous with Isana varman Maukharis whose date 551 is known. Therefore the first three Guptas may be assigned to the first half of the sixth century. Though Kumara Gupta defeated Isanavarman, the fortunes of his dynasty were eclipsed by the ascendancy of the Maukharis, and his successor Dumodara Gupta sustained a defeat at the hands of Sarvavarman Maukhari. The sixth Gupta, Mahasena, concluded an alliance with Prabhakaravardhana and defeated Sushutavarman of Assam. Consequent on the marriage alliance between the Pushyabhutis and the Maukharis, Deva Gupta allied himself with Sasanka, and their combined attack on Grahavarman ended in the latter's premature death. But the triumph of Harshavardhana secured to him the subordination of Madhava Gupta.

## SECTION XVII THE VAKATAKAS OF BERAR

The Vakatakas dominated Berar for two centuries expanding now and then in various directions. The name of the dynasty gives no clue to its origin and the names of some of its members are likely to mislead rather than inform. It was exactly contemporary with the Imperial Guptas. Its history is based chiefly on inscriptions with some aid from the *Puranas*. Its fortunes were not steady in the fourth century, but its predominance was asserted in the following century. The founder of the Vakataka power was Vindhya-sakti who is glorified in the Ajanta Cave inscription though he goes without royal titles. He is identified with the Puranic Vindhya-sakti Pravarasena I (300—330, this and the following reign periods are conjectural) according to the Chammak (near, Ellichpur

Berar) Copper Plate inscription of Pravarasena II, performed a surprisingly large number of sacrifices including four *asvamedhas* and assumed the title of *Samrat*. He is identical with the Puranic Pravira who is described as the valiant son of Vindhya sakti and the performer of *Vajapeya* sacrifices accompanied with liberal gifts. Therefore the combined labours of Vindhya sakti and Pravarasena I must have made the Vakatakas an imperial power. The next ruler was Rudrasena I (330—340) the grandson of Pravarasena I. He gave up the title of *Samrat*, and the *Puranas* say that the dynasty of Vindhyaakas (Vakatakas) came to an end after Pravira. The cause of this sudden change in the status of the Vakatakas is not known. Prithvisena I (340—390) rehabilitated his dynastic fortunes and conquered Kuntala (Western Dakhan and Northern Mysore). An inscription in Bundelkhand refers to "Vyaghradeva who meditates on the feet of the *Maharaja* of the Vakatakas the illustrious Prithvisena". This record conveys a good idea of his extensive dominions. So far the Vakatakas were worshippers of Siva. Rudrasena II (390—395), the son and successor of Prithvisena I, was a Vaishnava. He married Prabhavati, the daughter of Chandragupta II and Kubera-paga who after the demise of her husband became Regent for her minor son. The dominance of that Gupta emperor in the councils of the Vakatakas during the reign of Rudrasena II and the regency of Prabhavati is clear. His marriage alliance with the Vakatakas must be regarded as his preparation for the conquest of Western India. Pravarasena II (395—420) was the successor of Rudrasena II, but we do not know when he attained majority and when his mother's regency ended. His Chammak inscription, issued from his capital, Pravarapura, was indited in his 18th regnal year, besides giving the dynastic genealogy, it describes him as the most devout worshipper of Mahesvara. While he is mentioned as the *Maharaja* of the Vakatakas, the father of his mother is called the *Maharajadhiraja* Devagupta (Chandragupta II). This record proves the continuance of the latter's influence in the Vakataka Kingdom under Pravarasena II. Recent literary researches bring the

grandson and the grandfather into close contact with *Haridasa*, and lend credibility to *Pravarasena II*'s authorship of the Prakrit poem, *Setubandha*. *Prithvisena II* (420—445) and *Devasena* (445—465) the grandsons of *Pravarasena II*, appear to have changed the pro Gupta policy of their grandfather. The former is said to have raised his sunken family." It is surmised that he must have co-operated with the *Pushyamitras* and suffered defeat along with them at the hands of *Skandagupta*. But the chronology adopted here does not permit such a defeat in the time of *Prithvisena II*. Probably the *Pushyamitra* trouble was aggravated by the hostility of the *Vakatakas* to the Gupta Empire but nothing definite can be stated. The last great *Vakataka* was *Harisena* (465—500), the son of *Devasena*. We do not know the final date of the former, as a matter of fact, the whole of *Vakataka* chronology is uncertain but for the synchronism of *Rudrasena II* and *Pravarasena II* with *Chandragupta II*. *Harisena* is credited with the conquest of *Kuntala* (re-conquest) and of *Malwa*, *South Kosala*, *Kalinga*, *Trikuta* (North Konkan), *Lata* (South Gujarat) and *Andhra*. As regards his conquest of *Trikuta*, it is confirmed by the records of the *Trikutakas*, whose last known date is 494. He must have taken advantage of the misfortunes of the Guptas in the period of the Hun invasions and built up an empire in the Dakhan, including portions of trans *Vindhyan India*. Nothing is known about his successors, and his dynasty must have been superseded by the *Chalukyas* about the middle of the sixth century. We have already observed that the Gupta culture spread beyond the confines of the Northern Indian Empire, whose influence was more than commensurate with its limits. Some of the caves and paintings of *Ajanta* were indebted to the *Vakatakas*. One of their inscriptions is found there, and the caves were within their dominions. The last two *Vakatakas* through their ministers *Hastibhoja* and *Varahadeva*, two *Malabar Brahmins*, participated in the artistic progress of *Ajanta*. The Prakrit work attributed to *Pravarasena II* reminds us of the traditions of the *Satavahanas*, and his personal contact with *Chandragupta II* and *Kalidasa* makes him a conspicuous figure in literary

**Prithvi-  
sena II and  
Devasena**

**Harisena**

**Importance  
of the  
Dynasty**

annals The Sanskrit inscriptions of the Vakatakas—the foundation of their history—are further proof of their patronage of Sanskrit and of Gupta culture in general

## • SECTION XVIII THE BRIHATPHALAYANAS, ANANDAS SALANKAYANAS AND VISHNUKUNDINS OF ANDHRADESA

**Brihatphalayanasa and Anandas** The only Brihatphalayana (*gotra* name) known is Jayavarman, who seems to have ruled early in the fourth century and made a grant of tax free land to Brahmans in his tenth regnal year from Kuduru (near Masulipatam) which refers to him as devoted to Siva The Ananda kings Hastivarman and Damodaravarman were either descended from Sage Ananda or belonged to the Ananda *gotra* and may be assigned to the fourth century Their inscriptions are found in the Guntur District and they must have taken advantage of the decline of the Ikshvakus Hastivarman worshipped Siva and made many *hiranyagarbha* *danas* and *gosahasras* (two of the sixteen *mahadanas* or great gifts) Damodaravarman was a Buddhist The dynasty was overthrown probably by the Salankayanas in the fifth century

**Salankayanas** The Salankayanas of Vengi may be assigned to the period 335 to 460 The first king Devavarman is described as an *asvamedhayaṇi* or one who has performed the horse sacrifice The next ruler Hastivarman was one of those defeated and reinstated by Samudragupta After Nandivarman I and Chanaravarman came Nandivarman II who was a Vaishnava whereas his predecessors were Sivas who inscribed Siva's bull on their seals His inscriptions contain some details about his administration The last king Skandavarman was a Siva who venerated the sacred bull

**Vishnukundins** The genealogy and chronology of the Vishnukundin dynasty are by no means definitely settled The first two kings Vikramahendra (500—520) and Govindavarman (520—535) established their power in the region of Vinukonda (Guntur District) and were devoted to the god at Srisailem (Kurnool District) The third and most

distinguished member of the dynasty was Madhavavarman I (535—585) whose record dated in his 40th or 48th regnal year is known. He performed innumerable sacrifices including eleven *asvamedhas* and dominated the Vengi country. He married a Vakataka princess. His conflict with the Maugharis has been alluded to. He was a very orthodox follower of Vedic ritualism and called himself *parama'rahmanya* or the great friend of the Brahmins. Mr D C Sircar observes "No one except a fanatic can be expected to perform an *asvamedha* sacrifice and expose his wives to such indecent and obnoxious practices as are necessary in the performance of this sacrifice." \* We do not know whether such practices, though prescribed in the Vedic texts were actually followed particularly by Madhavavarman who performed that sacrifice eleven times. In the administration of justice he employed many forms of ordeal. His successor, Madhavavarman II (585—615) was followed by three rulers. Mr Sircar places the extinction of the dynasty in the eighth century and the last known king in 655—670 and contends that Vengi was not conquered by Pulakesin II Chalukya but only Pithapuram (Godavari District) and that the Vishnukundins were only weakened by the Chalukya conquest of Andhradesa, though later their kingdom was merged in the dominions of the Eastern Chalukyas.

## SECTION XIX THE KADAMBAS OF BANAVASI

**Origin and Chronology** The successors of the Satavahanas in Kuntala were the Chutus, who called themselves Satavahanas and were displaced by the Pallavas. The historical origin of the Kadambas is given in the Talagunda (Shimoga District Mysore) Pillar inscription of Kakutstavarman (430—450) the fifth Kadamba sovereign. Though the genealogy of the dynasty is well established its chronology is worked backwards from the known contemporaneity of some later Kadambas with the Western Gungas and the Western Chalukyas. It is presumed from the data of the Pillar inscription that the founder of the dynasty Mayurasarman

\* *Journal of the Department of Letters Calcutta University* XVI p 111

was the contemporary of Samudragupta. Another inscription of Kakutsthavarman is dated in the 80th year, and it is\* supposed that the reference is to the Kadamba era. The ancient or early Kadamba dynasty consisted of 13 rulers, who may be assigned to the period 345—610\*.

**The Pillar Inscription** The Pillar inscription is a posthumous record of Kakutsthavarman put up by his son, Santivarman. It is a lengthy document of basic importance for Kadamba history. Its contents may be summarised as follows. The Kadamba family was of orthodox Brahman extraction, the members of which devoted themselves to religious study and sacrifices. A *Kadamba* tree grew near their house and hence they were called Kadambas. Mayurasarman (345—370) went to Kanchi, the Pallava capital, to complete his Vedic studies, but in consequence of a quarrel with a Pallava soldier belonging to the cavalry branch of the army, he resolved to pursue a martial career, in the language of the inscription 'with the hand dexterous in grasping the *kusa* grass, the fuel, the stones, the ladle, the melted butter and the oblation vessel, he unsheathed a flaming sword, eager to conquer the earth. He defeated the frontier army of the Pallavas and carved out a kingdom for himself. The Pallavas of Kanchi, failing to put him down, came to terms with him and recognised him as ruler of the territory bounded by the Western sea. This account shows that Mayurasarman exploited the political confusion in South India resulting from Samudragupta's invasion and became the independent ruler of Banavasi (the capital, on the Varada, tributary of the Tungabhadra, the kingdom = Shimoga District). The inscription gives the names of his successors and praises them in the conventional manner. Kangavarman (370—395), Bhagiratha (395—420), and his two sons, Raghu (420—430) and Kakutsthavarman (430—450). One important detail mentioned in the record is that Kakutstha married his daughters to the Gupta princes and others (Vakatakas). These would be *pratiloma* marriages as the Guptas are supposed to be *Vaisyas* and as the Kadambas were Brahmanas. He

\* G. M. Moraes *The Kadamba Kula* (1931) Vide genealogical table before p. 15.



constructed a reservoir for the Siva temple at Talagunda visited by Satakarni and other pious kings.

**History** Mayurasarman and Kakutsthavarman were the great makers of Kadamba history; the former performed the horse-sacrifice. Hangavarman must have been defeated by Prithvisena I Vakataka. Probably Bhagiratha was the ruler of Kuntala to whom an embassy led by Kalidasa was sent by Chandragupta II. After the death of Santivarman (450—475), the Kadamba kingdom was divided between the two branches of the dynasty. Mrigesavarman (475—490) is said to have conquered the Gangas and the Pallavas; he was favourably disposed towards Jainism. Ravivarman (497—537) the successor of Mandhatrivarman (490—497), had to fight for the throne. He was a distinguished and popular ruler, and enjoyed a long reign. Harivarman (537—547) was different from his great father, and his weakness intensified the quarrel between the two royal branches. Further, Pulakesin I Chalukya, a feudatory of Harivarman, revolted and established his dynasty at Bidam. The elder branch ended with Harivarman. Krishnavarman II (547—565) of the younger branch strengthened himself by marrying his sister to a Ganga prince. Ajavarman (565—606) became subordinate to the Chalukyas. Bhogivarman (606—610) attempted in vain to re-establish the independence of his dynasty. The Kadambas probably introduced the cup shaped "padma-tankas". There was a revival of Kadamba power towards the close of the tenth century, the more important of the later dynasties ruled over Hingul (Dharwar District) and Goa, and their power became extinct in the fourteenth century with the rise of Vijaya nagar.

## SECTION XX THE WESTERN GANGAS OF TALAKAD

There are two dynasties of Gangas, the main branch holding sway from the fourth to the eleventh century in Mysore called the Western Gangas, and the other branch in Orissa referred to as the Eastern Gangas. The Western Ganga dominion, named Gangavadi (why, we do not know), embraced most of Mysore. The circumstances of its origin as detailed in later inscriptions are worthless for historical purposes, the Gangas claim to belong to the Ikshvaku family. The dynasty

consisted of twenty five rulers, most of them being Jains. It was founded by Konganivarman, perhaps in the second half of the fourth century, he is also known as Madhava I, Kolar was

**Madhava II** his head-quarters. His successor was his brother's son Madhava II (400—435), who is said to have mastered politics and the *Upanishads* and written a *Vritti* or commentary on the *Sutra* of Dattaka a predecessor of Vatsyayana (author of the *Kama Sutra*) relating to courtesans.

**Harivarman** The third king Harivarman (435—?) changed the capital to Talakad (modern Talkad, now buried in sand), on the Kaveri, near Sivasamudram. He seems to have been subordinate to the Pallavas. He gave a village to a Brahman who vanquished his Buddhist adversary in philosophical disputation. The next ruler was Vishnugopa more a saint than a king, who gave up Jainism and worshipped Vishnu, his intellectual powers remained intact throughout his life. His grandson and successor, Madhava III (460—500), married a Kadamba princess and worshipped Siva. After him came Avinita (500—540) who was crowned in his infancy and educated by Vijayakirti, a Jain. His benefactions were distributed to Jains and Brahmans. Though a Jain he worshipped Siva. He was succeeded by Durvinita (540—600) the pupil of Pujyapada a Jain grammarian and author of the *Siddhavatara*.

**Durvinita** The king commented on the fifteenth *sarga* of Bharavi's *Kiratarjuniya* (Bharavi himself is said to have lived at the Ganga court for some time), but the commentary is treated by some scholars including Dr. A. B. Keith as a literary forgery. He is also credited with the compilation of a Sanskrit grammar called *Siddhavatara* (perhaps the same as his teacher's work), and the translation of the *Brihatkatha* into Sanskrit. He was further a reputed Kannada man of letters. He favoured Vaishnavism. Lastly, he was a great conqueror who extended his dominions in the eastern and southern directions by overcoming the Pallavas. These scraps of information gleaned from the inscriptions of the Gangas show to some extent the part played by them down to the sixth century in the political, religious and cultural history of South India, but their chronology is conjectural.\*

\* M. V. Krishna Rao, *The Gangas of Talakad* (1936) Chapter I

## SECTION XXI THE PALLAVAS OF KANCHI

**Origin** On the identity of the terms Pahlava and Pallava some scholars hold that the Pallavas of South India were Pahlavas or Parthians who invaded India settled down in the Indus Valley then moved on to Western India and subsequently immigrated into the Kanchi region in the period of Satavahana decline. But it is difficult to explain their immigration into the Tamil country objectively. The famous author, Rajasekhara of the tenth century, the protege of the Gurjara Pratiharas regards the Pahlavas and the Pallavas as different peoples occupying the trans Indus territory and South India respectively. Moreover the Pallava and other South Indian records do not give any indications of the Pahlavas. It is hard to believe that foreigners became so soon Hindused as to perform the *astamedha* the other foreign rulers of India like the Sakas did not do so. The view that the Pallavas were of Tamil origin is equally improbable because their early records are in Prākrit, and their patronage of Tamil literature is so inconspicuous and of Sanskrit so conspicuous as to differentiate their policy from that of the Tamil powers of the Sangam age. Though it is not possible to explain clearly how they came into possession of Kanchi and Tondamandalam, their official connection with the Satavahanas is unquestionable. They were originally officers and governors of the south eastern portion of the Satavahana Empire who consequent on the decline of their masters became independent and extended their power southwards. Therefore the Pallavas were Andhra feudatories who rose into prominence towards the close of the third century and conquered the Kanchi region. Among the untenable theories of their origin is one connecting them with the Vakatakas though the *gotras* of the two dynasties were different, another regards them as of Chola Sinhalese origin.\*

**Sivaskandavarman** The history of the Pallavas from the fourth to the sixth century is not so obscure as that of the Cholas and the Pandyas during the same period, but their genealogy and chronology are to a large extent indefinite. Two Pallava dynasties are distinguished—one issuing their grants in Prakrit and the other in Sanskrit. Sivaskandavarman

\* I. Gopalan *History of the Pallavas of Kanchi* (1929) pp. 15-16.

and Vijayaskandavarman belonged to the first line and may be assigned to the first half of the fourth century. Bappa the predecessor of Sivaskanda lived probably towards the close of the previous century and we do not know whether he was the founder of the Pallava power at Kanchi or some one before him. Sivaskandavarman is known from his two undated Prakrit copper plate grants at Mayidavolu (Guntur District) and Hirahydagalli (Bellary District) both issued from Kanchi and seems to have been the ablest of the early Pallavas. Under him the kingdom of Kanchi extended from the Krishna to the South Pennar including the Bellary District. He assumed the title of *Dharmamaharaja* and performed the *astamedha* and other sacrifices. His inscriptions show that his administration was well organised in conformity with the Maurya system as modified in the period second century B C to third century A D. His successor Vijayaskandavarman is known from his queen Charudevi's British Museum Plates (originally belonging to the Guntur District) a grant in Prakrit with imprecatory verses in Sanskrit—the first Pallava gift to temples. He was followed by Buddhankura.

**Vishnugopa** The dynasty of the Sanskrit charters may be assigned to the period 350 to 550. Vishnugopa was the ruler defeated by Samudragupta after whose departure from South India a period of stress and storm set in. There are various genealogical lists given in the charters issued from places other than Kanchi. The names of more than sixteen kings are available. It is surmised by some scholars that the Pallavas lost Kanchi and withdrew to the region of Nellore. Even the capture of Kanchi by Karikala Chola is postulated but this theory is to be rejected in the light of the chronology of the Sangam age we have adopted. All this political confusion was due to the Kalabhra invasion of the Tamil land. In spite of the uncertainties of Pallava genealogy during this period the following princes may be taken to have ruled: Simhavarman I, Skandavarman I, Virakurcha, Skandavarman II, Kumaravishnu I, Buddha varman, Kumaravishnu II, Simhavarman II, Vishnugopa and Skandavarman III. These names suggest that Saivism

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Vaishnavism and Buddhism claimed adherents among the kings of the Sanskrit charters

**Simhavishnu (c 575—c 600).** Simhavishnu, the son of Simhavarman is regarded as belonging to a third Pallava dynasty whose inscriptions are on stone. There is no clear necessity to speak of three lines of kings according as their documents are copper plate inscriptions in Prakrit or Sanskrit or lithic records. As regards the first two dynasties, their *yatra* is the same and the names of their members do not justify their separation. Moreover, the Vayalur Pillar inscription of Rajasimha gives a consolidated list of the Pallavas without dynastic differentiation among themselves. There are other records of some members of the so-called Simhavishnu dynasty claiming some of those of the so-called dynasty of the Sanskrit charters as their ancestors. With Simhavishnu begins the period of the great Pallavas, and *genealogical and chronological questions do not upset us*. His kingdom stretched from Madras to the Kaveri, he conquered the Chola country. He claims victories over the Cholas, the Pandyas, the Kalabhras etc. and partly his claim is well founded, his title of *Aravisimha* is significant. Bharavi is said to have visited Kanchi. Simhavishnu was a Vaishnava. Bas reliefs of himself and his queen exist in a cave at Mahabalipuram. Thus he started the Pallavas on their career of political and cultural achievement.

**The Kalabhra Problem** We have seen the troubles and tribulations of the Pallavas during the two centuries before Simhavishnu. For three centuries, from 4th to 6th, the Pandyas suffered total eclipse, and the Cholas for nearly six centuries 4th to 9th. In the fourth or fifth century, after Samudragupta's South Indian expedition, the Pallavas, the Cholas and the Pandyas succumbed to a common enemy. The Pallavas and the Pandyas recovered from the blow sooner than the Cholas. Now the question relates to that enemy and the catastrophe brought about by him. We know from inscriptions that the Kalabhras were the cause of political confusion in the Tamil country, but the problem of their identification is difficult. Many suggestions have been put forward but it is best to identify the Kalabhras with the

Kalavar, a predatory tribe in occupation of the northern frontier of Tondamandalam whose chief Pulli of Tirupati, is mentioned in the Sangam works. These people must have been disturbed by the Pallava conquest of Tondamandalam and their southern movement seems to have commenced. The southern expedition of Samudragupta must have aggravated the situation and precipitated a conflict between the Kalabhras and the Pallavas. The victorious Kalabhras must have marched further south and overthrown the Chola and Pandya rule. Ultimately they were put down by the Pallavas and the Pandyas. We know much less about the introduction of the Kalabhra interregnum into the Tamil kingdoms than about its extinction.

## CHAPTER VII

### INDIA FROM 600 TO 900

#### SECTION I HARSHA OF THANESAR AND KANAUJ

(606—647)

**Authorities** The history of the Guptas based mostly on epigraphical numismatic and monumental evidences suffers from many *lacunae* owing to the paucity of literary materials. The fullness of Harsha's history is indebted to two works, each unique in its own line. His epigraphs and those of his contemporaries provide only supplementary information to a limited extent. His coins, whose existence is denied by some do not take us far and Tibetan and Chinese sources elucidate particularly the closing years of his reign. Therefore the historian's almost exclusive reliance in his study of Harsha is on the literary authorities—the *Harshacharita* of Bana (or Banabhatta) and the *Travels* of the Chinese pilgrim Hsuen Tsang coupled with his biography composed by his friend and compatriot Hwui li.

**Bana** The days when the *Harshacharita* (Life of Harsha) of Bana was disparaged as a source of history are gone. Though it is only a fragment written in the style of a romance by an enthusiastic admirer of Harsha it should be recognised that Bana knew his hero intimately a gifted man like



himself. He was an accurate observer of men and things and therefore his work is full of vivid descriptions of social life and of varied localities and enables us to put our finger on the pulse of the period to which it belongs. There is historical matter even in some of his punning references. He does not, like writers of romance, reconstruct an epoch. Since he chose a contemporary subject of general interest and treated it in a way suited to his age he could not have departed much from the truth; he indulges in flattery and exaggeration but does not tell an untruth. In fact in this respect he is not different from Hsuen Tsang. The high value of his work for historical purposes is now generally understood.

*The Harshacharita* is an incomplete history of Harsha in eight chapters. The first chapter is concerned with the family of its author, and the introductory verses are of great value for literary chronology as they mention a number of

works and authors anterior to Bana the  
**Contents of the work** *Vasavadatta* Satavahana (Hali), Pravarasena, Bhasa, Kalidasa and the *Brihatkatha*. The second chapter deals with Bana's introduction to Harsha. The third chapter contains a description of Sthanvisvara (Thanesar). The next chapter traces the ancestry of Harsha from Pushyabhuti (Pushyabhuti) and gives details about Prabhakara Vardhana, his queen Yasomati, the births of Rajyavardhana, Harsha and Rajyasri, their companion and uncle Bhandi and Rajyasri's marriage. The fifth chapter describes Yasomati's voluntary death a little before her husband passed away, and Harsha's inconsolable grief. The following chapter deals with the reaction of the king's death on Rajyavardhana who had been away from the capital to war with the Huns and who on his return home refused to step into his father's place and asked Harsha to shoulder the royal burden, the death of Grahavaman Maukhari and imprisonment of Rajyasri by the king of Malwa, Rajyavardhana's punitive expedition against him, his easy success, and his assassination by the king of Gauda (Sasanka), the request of Simhanada the Commander in Chief to Harsha to abandon grief and return to action, Harsha's solemn resolve to wipe off the earth the race of vipers like the king of Gauda and the enumeration by

Shandagupta, commandant of the elephant corps whose 'nose was as long as his sovereign's pedigree' of the various instances of disastrous carelessness the chief of them being the deaths of Brihadratha (Maurya) Kakavarṇa (Sasunaga), the last Sunga, and the last of the Western Satraps. The penultimate chapter describes the grand military move of Harsha, the embassy from Bhaskaravarman of Assam, the report of Bhandi to Harsha regarding Rajyasri's escape from prison and flight to the Vindhya with a few followers. Bhandi's commission to advance against the Guṇḍa ruler, and Harsha's march in search of his sister. The last chapter contains a wonderful description of the many religious and philosophical sects living in harmony in the Vindhyan forest under the headship of the Buddhist sage Divakaramitra. It paints the pitiable condition of Rajyasri about to immolate herself and her rescue by Harsha and mentions the latter's resolve to become a Buddhist ascetic along with his sister after avenging the deaths of his brother-in-law and brother and his return to the imperial camp on the bank of the Ganges with Rajyasri and Divakaramitra.

The value of the *Harshacharita* is difficult to appreciate fully from a short summary. It is as much based on real events as Scott's *Quentin Durward* or *Waterley*. Its basis and its main episodes are historical. It is the treatment of the subject that is romantic—mixing up of history and romance. The court, the camp, the quiet villages and the still more quiet monasteries and retreats whether of Brahmins or Buddhists are all painted with singular power, and his (Banar's) narrative illustrates and supplements the Chinese traveller's journal at every turn. The book is full of Sanskrit lore of every kind.

**Hsuen Tsang** Hsuen Tsang (or Yuan Chwang), the Master of the Law (of the Buddha), was born in 600 and his childhood gave unmistakable signs of his later greatness. He shunned gay society, devoted his time to serious study and became a Buddhist monk at the age of twenty. Dissatisfied with the Chinese translations of the

\* Cowell and Thomas *The Harshacharita of Banar* (1897) Preface pp VIII XI and XII

Buddhist scriptures, he yearned for contact with the holy land of his faith. Setting aside the passport regulations of his country, he stealthily left for India in 629 and after extensive travels returned home in 645. The emperor forgave his fault, became intimate with him and offered to take him into the imperial service. But Hsuen Tsang declined the offer with thanks, and retired to a monastery to translate his Indian collection into Chinese. Till his death in 664 he knew not a moment of idleness. He was prodigiously learned, extremely pious and truly great, and his compatriots worshipped him after his death. In spite of his manifold virtues, he was credulous in matters of Buddhist miracle. His interest in life was confined to Buddhism. Therefore he failed as a critical observer of men and things. But all this may be regarded as the defects of his own qualities. Unlike Fa hien, he travelled throughout India, and returned by the land route through which he had come. He remained in Harsha's Empire for eight years, and made better use of his opportunities than had been possible for his illustrious predecessor in Indian travel. His account of what he saw and heard in this country deals not only with Harsha and his administration but also with the condition of India in the first half of the seventh century. The indebtedness to it of the historian is really great. \* REGARDING the amount of information gleaned by Hsuen Tsang on the various aspects of Indian life, his account is incomparably superior to the *Harshacharita*. But it is sketchy in many places and can never approach the concentrated observation and descriptive power enshrined in Bana's biography of Harsha. His credulity made him the victim of story tellers, though we are glad that he was inclined to record the traditions that came to his ears. It was Harsha's Buddhist proclivities that drew to him the Master of the Law, who was therefore more lucky than Fa hien. Like Bana, he praises the emperor unreservedly. "His qualifications moved heaven and earth, his sense of justice was admired by the gods and men. His renown spread abroad everywhere. To describe all his conduct would be to tell again the deeds of Sudana (the hero of a Buddhist Jataka story). He forgot sleep

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and food in his devotion to good works. His reference to Harsha's 60 000 elephants is suspicious. His statement that the emperor after six years of campaigning at the commencement of his reign enjoyed uninterrupted peace for thirty years without raising a weapon requires modification. But these defects are nothing when we consider the wealth of reliable information he places at our disposal.

**Harsha's career** The founder of the family of Harsha of Thanesar was one Pushyabhuti a pious Suva mentioned by Bana. It was Prabhakaravardhana (583—605) who first assumed the title of *Maharajadhiraja* and *Parama* *bhattaraka* his father and grandfather being mere *Maharajas*. Bana describes him as a lion to the Huna deer a burning fever to the king of the Indus land a troubler of the sleep of Gujarat a bilious plague to that scent-elephant the lord of Gandhara a looter to the lawlessness of the Latas and an awe to the creeper of Malwa's glory. His mother was Mahasenagupta and his queen Yasomati. On his death in 605 his eldest son Rajyavardhana ascended the throne at the age of nineteen. The Malwa king in league with Sasanka of Bengal compassed the death of Grahavarman Maukhari the husband of Rajyasri. Rajyavardhana led a punitive expedition against the ruler of Malwa and defeated him but was treacherously slain in 606 by Sasanka. Harsha was then sixteen years old (born in 590—calculated on the basis of Bana's data) and his widowed sister thirteen years of age. We are told that Harsha accepted the throne at the instance of the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara and of the Goddess of Royal Prosperity according to Huen Tsang and Bana respectively and both authorities agree in saying that Harsha was at first reluctant to shoulder the responsibility of kingship. We do not know when exactly Harsha's love of Buddhism began. Bana says after his conquests Mr C V Vaidya rightly points out that Harsha's initial unwillingness to ascend the throne refers to the throne of Kanauj (Kanya kubja or hunch backed girl Mahodaya etc) after Grahavarman's death.

At the outset of his royal career Harsha was placed in a peculiarly difficult position. He had not only to avenge the

murders of his brother in law and brother, but also to find out his sister who had fled to the Vindhyan forest without brooking the restraint of her imprisonment by the enemies of her late husband. He went first in pursuit of Rajyasri, discovered her when she was about to commit *anumarana* (self immolation after her husband's death) and dissuaded her from her grim resolve. Though Bana embellishes her story, there are no reasons for suspecting its main outlines. Subsequent to the recovery of his accomplished sister who was a devout Buddhist, Harsha set about the task of subduing his enemies. By 612 his imperial position had been firmly established and his army immensely strengthened. He was warlike to the core and later when he distributed all his possessions in charity, he would not weaken his army in any manner. The end of the period of continuous warfare witnessed his coronation and the foundation of an era starting from his accession to the throne in 606.

Though a high minded man Harsha does not say that he was defeated by Pulakesin II Chalukya, because it was not customary to record failures so much so that inscriptions sometimes support contradictory claims. In evaluating epigraphical testimony we come across such difficulties. But, in the present case we possess the evidence of Hsuen Tsang who says in his *Travels*. "The great king Siladitya (Harsha) at this time was invading East and West and countries far and near were giving in allegiance to him, but Maharashtra refused to become subject to him." The biographer of the pilgrim records "Siladitya raja boasting of his skill and the invariable success of his generals, filled with confidence himself, marched at the head of his troops to contend with this prince, but he was unable to prevail or subjugate him (although) he has gathered troops from the five Indies (the Panjab, Kanauj, Mithila, Bengal and Orissa) and the best generals from all countries." Corroborative evidence of Pulakesin's triumph is supplied by many of his inscriptions which describe him as one who earned the title of *Paramesvara* by defeating Harshavardhana, the world lord of the whole of

Uttarapatha (Northern India) His Aihole inscription of 634 punningly says that "Harsha whose lotus feet were arrayed with rays of the jewels of the diadems of hosts of feudatories prosperous with unmeasured might, through him (Pulakesin II) had his *harsha* (mirth) melted away by fear, having become loathsome with his rows of lordly elephants fallen in battle. The date of this conflict between the Northern Indian and South Indian Lords Paramount is given by Dr. Smith as 620 on Chinese evidence. Dr. R. K. Mookerji, however, assigns it to 619, if not earlier, on the ground that the Hardarabad inscription of that year mentions Pulakesin's title of *Paramesvara*," whereas some others would advocate a much later date, about 630 †

About 635 Dhruvasena II of Valabhi was defeated and reduced to vassalage by Harsha who, however, gave his daughter in marriage to him. In 641 Harsha sent an embassy to China. The year 643 witnessed his campaign against Kongoda (Ganjam District), the unique honour he bestowed on Huen Tsang, the attempt on his own life, and a Chinese mission to him. He could not receive the second Chinese embassy sent to him in 646. His death in 647 and the subsequent ministerial usurpation produced internal confusion and a serious clash with the party of Chinese envoys who ultimately dealt severely with the usurper with the help of Tibet and Nepal.

**Extent of the Empire** The territory administered by Harsha seems to have been a little more extensive than that of the Guptas. It stretched from the Brahmaputra delta to Kathiawar, including a part of Orissa in the east and Cutch in the west and to Jalandhara in the Panjab, including perhaps Nepal, but excluding Rajputana, Sindh and a large part of the Panjab. Therefore it was almost confined to Northern India without embracing the whole of it. The inclusion of Nepal in it is doubted by some scholars but the possible use of his era there may be regarded as *prima facie* evidence of its possession by Harsha. The southern boundary of the Vindhya was fixed by Pulakesin II. But an inscription recently discovered in

\* R. K. Mookerji, *Harsha* (1926) p. 36 n.

† R. S. Tripathi, *History of Kanauj* (1937) p. 129.

the Shunog District (Misore) says that while Siladitya the light of the quarters the most powerful, and a thorn in the way of the bravest ascended the throne of the empire" his general fought against Mahendra and died the two kings are identified by some with Harsha and Mahendravarman I Pallava. If this identification were well founded our idea of the extent of Harsha's Empire must undergo a radical revision. Bhaskaravarman of Assam was the friend and ally of Harsha whose relations with some rulers of North Western India and with China were cordial. Though Sasanka's aggressions were curbed by Harsha's martial activities, and thus vengeance was taken on the murderer of his brother, they seem to have been circumscribed rather than eradicated. In a Ganjam inscription dated 619 of his feudatory, Sasanka is styled *Maharajadhiraja*, and his gold coins with the image of Siva and Nandi indicate his importance till 637, the date of his death. The Ganjam expedition of Harsha in 643 was apparently connected with the death of the great adversary of his family.

**Harsha's Religion** Pushyabhuti was a worshipper of Siva, Prabhaknavardhana and his father Adityavardhana adored the Sun. Rajyavardhana and Rajyasri were Buddhists. Bana says that on the eve of his *digvijaya* Harsha worshipped Nilalohita (Siva). The Banskhera inscription of 628 describes him as a *Parama Mahesvara*. The Madhuban record of 631 says that he was a devotee of Mahesvara 'who like Mahesvara is compassionate to all created beings' and concludes with the following remarkable passage. Gifts and the protection of the fame of others are the result of fortune that is unstable like lightning or a water bubble. With deeds, thoughts and words living beings should do their duty. Harsha has declared that an unsurpassable mode of acquiring spiritual merit. Here perhaps we have the turning point of his religious life. His Buddhist leanings in the early part of his reign are vouched for by Bana while Huen Tsang would make him a Buddhist at the commencement of his reign, with the title of Siladitya. It is not clear whether, like Asoka, he became a Buddhist monk. There is no doubt that during the latter part of his life he became an ardent Hinayanist, and was

The  
Turning  
Point

transformed into a Mahayanist by his contact with the Chinese pilgrim. He compelled the king of Kashmir to part with a tooth relic of the Buddha and duly housed it. His religious policy is well recapitulated by Huen Tsang. He caused the use of animal food to cease throughout the Five Indies and he prohibited the taking of life under severe penalties. He erected thousands of *topes* (*stupas*) on the banks of the Ganges established Travellers Rests through all his dominions and erected Buddhist monasteries at sacred places of the Buddhists. He regularly held the Quinquennial Convocation and gave away in religious alms everything except the material of war. Once a year he summoned all the Buddhist monks together, and for 21 days supplied them with the regulation requisites. He furnished the chapels and liberally adorned the common halls of the monasteries. He brought the Brethren together for examination and discussion, giving rewards and punishments according to merit and demerit. Those Brethren who kept the rules of their Order strictly and were thoroughly sound in theory and practice he advanced to the Lion's throne (*Simhasana*) and from these he received religious instruction. Those who though perfect in the observance of the ceremonial code were not learned in the past he merely honoured with formal reverence. Those who neglected the ceremonial observances of the Order and whose immoral conduct was notorious were banished from his presence and from the country. The neighbouring princes and the statesmen who were zealous in good works and unwearied in the search for moral excellence he led to his own seat and called (them his) good friends and he would not converse with those who were of a different character. He did not go abroad during the three months or the Rain season Retreat. At the royal lodges every day viands were provided for 1000 Buddhist monks and 500 Brahmans. The king's day was divided into three periods of which one was given up to affairs of government and two were devoted to religious works.\* It is incorrect to describe Harsha as an eclectic in religion. His career in spite of his interminable campaigns is strongly reminiscent of that of

\* T. Watters *On Yuen Chwang's Travels in India* I (1904) p. 314



**Asoka** His passion for religious discussion does not resemble the intellectual earnestness of Akbar the free thinker, but the spiritual fervour of the great religious propagandists of ancient India. A Syrian Christian is reported to have gone to Harsha's court in 639, but this is called in question by some scholars.

Harsha met Hsuen Tsang in Bengal on his return from the Ganjam campaign in 643, and decided to honour him by holding a religious assembly of all denominations at Kanauj. It was attended by 20 kings, 1000 scholars from the University of Nalanda, 3000 Hinayanists and Mahayanists, and 3000 Brahmins and Jains. A grand procession was conducted, and a statue of the Buddha was enthroned. The proceedings began with Hsuen Tsang's exposition of Mahayanism and the announcement of a thesis for discussion in the challenging words characteristic of the age that the Master of the Law offered his own head as the reward of a successful refutation of his thesis. No opponents came forward during the first five days, but Harsha on learning that Hsuen Tsang's life was in danger, owing to the underhand methods of his antagonists, proclaimed severe penalties for any violence to the pilgrim. The conference went on for twenty three days on the whole, and on the final day, arson and attempted assassination of Harsha disgraced the proceedings. On the strength of the confessions of 500 Brahmin conspirators, they were exiled. Hsuen Tsang was loaded with costly presents by Harsha and his feudatories, but the pilgrim declined them with thanks. The assembly concluded with a procession with Hsuen Tsang on elephant back, much against his own will, in order to mark the triumph of the Mahayanism expounded by him.

Hsuen Tsang was invited to attend the sixth quinquennial gathering of Harsha's reign for distribution of charity and religious festivities at the junction of the Ganges and the Jumna. The Buddha, the Sun god and Siva were honoured with festivities and distribution of gifts to about half a million people, during seventy five days belonging to all religions in the Five Indies. We are told that all the savings of Harsha during the past five years were exhausted and that, though he was reduced

**The Allahabad Gathering**

to beggary, he was extremely happy that " his treasure had been bestowed in the field of religious merit " Finally, the Chinese pilgrim started on his homeward journey with a few of the many presents showered upon him by Harsha and his feudatory *rajas*, and with his grand collection of many relics and innumerable images of the Buddha and hundreds of manuscripts, some of which he lost in the course of his journey, which was doubly adventurous owing to his occasional encounters with robbers

**Administration** Though the inscriptions of the age of Harsha and those of his elder and younger contemporaries give us some knowledge of the mechanism of his government in conformity with the Gupta organisation, its character and spirit we can learn from no other authority than Hsien Tsang who describes in general the Indian government of his time and also the administration of his imperial patron " He was just in his administration and punctilious in the discharge of his duties The king made visits of inspection throughout his dominion, not residing long at any place, but having temporary buildings erected for his residence at each place of sojourn He was indefatigable and the day was too short for him " \* Harsha was thus famous not only for his warlike activity but also for his administrative vigilance Such frequent royal peregrinations were doubly necessary owing to the partial insecurity of the roads to which Hsien Tsang was the victim now and then, and because of the multiplicity of political difficulties environing him The establishment of an empire and the effective conduct of its government must be regarded as Harsha's *tour de force*

Hsien Tsang was much impressed with the good intentions of the government and its earnestness in promoting the people's welfare As the Government is generous official requirements are few Families are not registered, and individuals are not subject to forced labour contributions Of the royal land there is a four fold division One part is for the expenses of government and state worship one for the endowment of

**Royal  
Activity**

\* Watters op cit I, pp 313-44

great public servants, one to reward high intellectual eminence, and one for acquiring religious merit by gifts to the various sects. Taxation being light, and forced service being sparingly used, every one keeps to his hereditary occupation and attends to his patrimony. The king's tenants pay one-sixth of the produce as rent. Tradesmen go to and fro bartering their merchandise after paying light duties at ferries and barrier stations. Those who are employed in the government service are paid according to their work. Ministers of state and common officials all have their portion of land, and are maintained by the cities assigned to them.\*

Hiuen Tsang's account of the administration of criminal justice shows that the cruel punishments of the Maurya age continued in the seventh century. He mentions  
**Criminal Justice** four ordeals employed to determine the guilt or innocence of the alleged culprits—by water, fire, weighing and poison, extremely barbarous and horribly superstitious. But, "as the government is honestly administered and the people live together on good terms, the criminal class is small. The statute law is sometimes violated and plots made against the sovereign, when the crime is brought to light, the offender is imprisoned for life; he does not suffer any corporal punishment, but alive and dead he is not treated as a member of the community. For offences against social morality and disloyal and unsocial conduct, the punishment is to cut off the nose, or an ear, or a hand, or a foot, or to banish the offender to another country or into the wilderness. Other offences can be atoned for by a money payment"†

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**Army** honour is assigned to the last division, the Commander-in-Chief riding on an elephant. But in detailing the strength of Harsha's army there is no mention of chariots by Hiuen Tsang. Nor is there any reference to them by Bana. Hence it is probable that Harsha relied on the efficiency of the other three "limbs" of his army. We are told by the pilgrim that "the National Guard are heroes of choice valour, and, as the profession is hereditary,

\* Watters *op cit*, I, pp 176-77.

† *Ibid*, pp 171-72.

they become adepts in military tactics. In peace they guard the sovereign's residence, and in war they become the intrepid vanguard. The infantry go lightly into action and are perfect experts with all the implements of war such as spear, shield, bow and arrow, sword, sabre, etc. having been drilled in them for generations.

A remarkable feature of the government organisation, rather too briefly alluded to by Huen Tsang, is the attention bestowed upon public records. As to their  
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**Economic Condition** The guild organisation is mentioned by Huen Tsang and Banu, and the luxurious life of the court testifies to the progress made in the arts and crafts. Much improvement in town planning is recorded, though the public streets were not sufficiently wide. Storeyed buildings and furniture were in great variety. Though Pataliputra had declined other great cities came into existence or continued to flourish—Thanesar, Mathura, Kanauj, Allahabad, Ayodhya, Benares, Tamruk, etc. Gold and silver coins, cowries and small pearls constituted the media of exchange. Inland trade was facilitated by light duties as noted by Huen Tsang. This was a great period of Indian transmarine colonisation and cultural diffusion, and of commercial contact with South Eastern Asia.

**Social Life** Huen Tsang describes the four chief castes and regards the Vaisyas as traders and the Sudras as agriculturists, he does not venture to enumerate the innumerable mixed castes. He alludes to the segregation of the untouchables.

Butchers, fishermen, public performers, executioners and scavengers are forced to live outside the city, and they sneak along on the left when going about in the hamlets. Social intercourse among the castes was free and active as is clear

\* Watters *op cit* I p 171

† *Ibid* p 151

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† *Id* p 151

from Ban's description of the associates of his early years who were of all castes and many professions, including a potter, a dancing girl, an ascetic widow, a shampooer, a dicer, a goldsmith and a drummer. Hiuen Tsang refers to the prohibition of remarriage of widows and of marriage of close relations on the father's or mother's side. The custom of *sati* was in vogue but not that of the tonsure of widows, as Bana alludes to the widow's braid of hair. *Anuloma* marriages were not rare. Bana mentions his two *Parasava* brothers (his father's sons by a Sudra woman). Hiuen Tsang notes the absence of tailoring and rarity of shoes, the simplicity and frugality of Brahmans and Kshatriyas, the luxurious dress and ornaments of kings, nobles and rich men, the honesty and morality of the people in general because 'they fear the retribution for sins in other lives', three ways of disposal of the dead—cremation, water burial and exposure in the woods, and the drowning of men very old or afflicted with incurable disease, in the Ganges. Bana refers to the custom of lifting the turban as a mark of respect. To some extent Hiuen Tsang and Bana describe conditions which prevail today, and hence the unique interest of their works.

**Harsha as a Man of Letters** Harsha wrote three dramas in Sanskrit—the *Ratnavali*, the *Priyadarsika* and the *Nagananda*. Doubts about his authorship of all these works are dissipated by their unity of authorship by their references to the experiences of Harsha, and by Itsing's statement that he 'versified the story of Jimutavahana (the hero of the *Nagananda*) and was 'exceedingly fond of literature'. The tale that somebody composed them on his behalf is contradicted by their being impregnated with the personality of Harsha and by later literary references to his authorship of those plays. Though quoted by Alankarilas or writers on poetics, he is not a great dramatist. The first two dramas deal with love and court intrigue and may be called 'comedies of the harem'. But the third play is saturated with heroic self-sacrifice and Buddhist sentiments like charity and magnanimity. Jimutavahana, on behalf of serpents, offered himself as a prey to Garuda. Finally the latter was convinced of the error of his ways and gave up his serpent prey, and the serpent world rejoiced. Hence the title of the play *Joy of Serpents*.

It perhaps reveals the self of Harsha, transformed by Buddhism, in the exclamation of the hero "He who is ready to give his very life for others, out of his own feeling of compassion for them, unasked and unbidden—how can he think of the cruel slaughter of men for the sake of winning a kingdom for himself? Naturally such a play achieved unique popularity in Buddhist countries. Harsha's Banskhara and Mithuban copper plate inscriptions, the former containing the facsimile of his signature and showing him as an expert calligraphist, seem to record his own compositions, expressive of Buddhist sentiments, and not without poetic merit. Moreover, two Sanskrit *stotras* eulogising the Buddha and the eight great *chaityas* are regarded as his productions. Even a grammatical work is attributed to him.

**His Patronage of Learning** Itsing says that Siladitya (Harsha) asked the scholars at his court to compose verses, and all the compositions were put together and named *Tatakamala* as they related to the previous births of the Buddha. Bana was the greatest ornament of Harsha's court. Besides the biography of his patron, he wrote the *Kadambari*, his masterpiece, a great romance superior to Subandhu's *Vasavadatta* in some respects. It is a cycle of stories with a complicated structure. Bana's style is greatly admired by Indian critics, while Western criticism follows the hostile lead of Weber. Anyhow his poetic merit and his descriptive and dramatic power are undeniable—his account of the death of Prabhakaravardhana. He is also regarded by some as the author of the play the *Parvatiparinaya* and of the *Chandisataka*\*. His brother-in-law (father-in-law, according to another version) Mayura, is the author of an erotic *ashtika* (a collection of eight stanzas) in which his mastery of the *Kamasutra* is exhibited. Tradition says that his daughter regarded that composition as directed against herself and cursed her father, who consequently became afflicted with leprosy, and that in this predicament he composed the *Sargatsataka*, a very popular work, and was cured of that loathsome disease. There are now learned people in this country who believe that the recital of that *Sataka* will cure leprosy. Another literary figure at Harsha's court was Matanga.



Divakara Though the unique poet philosopher grammarian Bhartṛihari lived in the first half of the seventh century we do not know whether he came into contact with Harsha.

**Sylvan Abodes of Learning** Intellectual activity in sylvan *asramas* was characteristic of ancient India. Bana gives a picture of the *asrama* of the Buddhist sage Divakara mitra full of representatives of numerous sects living in perfect harmony and pursuing their proper studies. Harsha saw there Buddhists from various provinces devotees dead to all passion Jinas in white robes white mendicants (Brahmanical ascetics in white robes) followers of Krishna Brahmacharis (pupils) ascetics who pulled out their hair followers of Kapila (founder of Sankhya philosophy) atheists followers of Kanada (founder of Vaisheshika philosophy) Vedantins Naiyayikas (logicians) philosophers of elements (*Dhātuvāda*) Dharmasastras Pauranikas ritualists, grammarians Pancharatrikas (a Vaishnava sect) and others all diligently following their own tenets pondering urging objections raising doubts resolving them (giving etymologies) disputing studying and explaining.

Huen Tsang credits the people of the Middle Country with clearness and correctness in speech, and regards their pronunciation as admirable. He mentions five subjects taught to boys from the age of seven: grammar mechanical arts, medicine logic and *adhyatmaśāstra* or philosophy. He refers to the perseverance of the teachers who instruct the inert and sharpen the dull. His account of the truly great scholars is worthy of note. There are men who fond of the refinements of learning live content in seclusion leading lives of continence. These promenade through life away from human affairs. Their fame is far spread. The rulers treating them with ceremony and respect cannot make them come to court. Now as the State holds men of learning and genius in esteem and the people respect those who have high intelligence the honours and praises of such men are conspicuously abundant and the attentions private and official paid to them are very considerable. With them there is honour in knowing truth and there is no disgrace in being destitute.

Though Hiuen Tsang mentions a number of educational centres (monasteries devoted to religion and learning) the most famous of them all were the Hinayana University of Valabhi and the Mahayana University of Nalanda (near Rajgriha about 50 miles from Gaya). The latter achieved more than an Indian reputation and our knowledge of it is extensive, though it is not mentioned by Fa hien or Hsüan Tsang. Hiuen Tsang gives a short but highly valuable account of it and I tsing deals with it both Chinese pilgrims visiting it in the course of their travels in India in the seventh century.

The University of Nalanda seems to have been founded in the fifth century, and patronised by Kumāragupta I and a number of his successors and by Harsha, who built a monastery there and supported the University in other ways. The term *Pandita* was used to denote a Professor as well as the head of the University. Dharmapala, a citizen of Kanchi, who lived in the early years of the seventh century, became the Vice Chancellor of Nalanda and was a great writer on Buddhist logic and metaphysics. He was a famous controversialist and exponent of Mahayanism. He was succeeded by Śīlabhadra who belonged to Samatata or delta of the Brahmaputra and it was during his period of office that Hiuen Tsang visited Nalanda and received the kind attentions of that great *Pandita*. Harsha applied to him for four scholars well versed in the doctrines of more than one sect and with other specified qualifications. Śīlabhadra by his learning and character achieved a solid reputation.

Though a Buddhist University in the curriculum of studies, intended for non-Buddhists as well the Brahmanical subjects like the *Vedas* were included. Though the course of studies was predominantly theological and philosophical, there was provision for the teaching of medicine. For those who wanted to complete their education at Nalanda, the entrance test was conducted orally by the keepers of the Gate who were profoundly learned men the entrance examination was so

difficult that not more than thirty per cent of the candidates were successful. Education was free and available to all, and the revenue of the University was derived from the royal endowment of a hundred to two hundred villages. Hiuen Tsang's biographer says that there were about 10,000 students at Nalanda while according to I-tsing, their number exceeded 1000. Referring to foreign students Hiuen Tsang observes that those educated at Nalanda were treated with respect everywhere. Besides teaching there were discussions which played a more important part in the progress of students. Time was regulated by a clepsydra or water-clock. There were eight halls and three hundred rooms, says I-tsing. His lengthy account of the methods of study and of the text books used in India must be taken as applicable to Nalanda where he lived for ten years; it emphasises grammar and is of prime value for literary history. The contribution of Nalanda to Sanskrit learning was substantial. We saw that 1,000 representatives of Nalanda attended the Kanauj Conference of Harsha, and the exodus of Nalanda Pandits to other parts of Asia shows the far reaching consequences of the growth of that University. What Buddhism did for religion, Nalanda did for learning.

**Art** The monuments of Harsha's age though very few, continue the Gupta style. Hiuen Tsang describes the glory of the monasteries and temples of Nalanda with their many storeys and a copper statue of the Buddha eight feet in height. To some extent Harsha contributed to the artistic enrichment of Nalanda which was largely due to Purnavarman, the Buddhist ruler of Magadha. The brick temple of Lakshmana at Sirpur (Raipur District, the Central Provinces), "one of the most beautiful in all India, unsurpassed in the richness and refinement of its ornament," is assigned to the period of Harsha.

**Harsha's Character and Achievements** Harsha conformed to the precept of royal activity laid down in the *Arthashastra* and followed by great sovereigns like Asoka and

Samudragupta. He was a man of many wars and his allegiance to Buddhism did not cool down his martial ardour. After his preliminary conquests he strengthened his military equipment and his charity did not lead to the emasculation of his army. His early domestic tragedies stimulated him to redoubled exertions and ended in the creation of an extensive empire. He was not like Samudragupta an undefeated general but his enemies were Pulakesin II and Sasanka. Though the record of his conquests was broken by a failure and though Sasanka flourished for a long time in spite of his efforts to demicinate his power, his imperial achievement is creditable if we bear in mind the racial heterogeneity of the people after the Hun invasions of India and the growing strength of the centrifugal forces.

As an administrator, he was active and just, and his frequent tours must have enabled him to study the needs of his subjects and provide for them. Still his establishment of peace and order was to some extent imperfect. We have treated 631 as a landmark in his spiritual evolution. The unique experiences of his early life—his father's decease, his brother-in-law's untimely end, his brother's assassination and the attempted suicide of his sister,—coupled with his association with Divakaramitra must have contributed to his conversion and there is no mistaking his zeal for Buddhism in the last decade of his reign particularly after his contact with Huen Tsang.

There is a school of historians whose black heart is Buddhism and when they are in need of an explanation of Indian failure they seek for the Buddhist. Harsha is blamed by them for his pro Buddhist policy and its adverse effect on national virility. But unfortunately for their contention three of the most successful monarchs in early Indian history were Buddhists—Asoka, Kanishka and Harsha. There are also scholars who associate the fall of the Vijayanagar Empire with the ascendancy of Vaishnavism for getting the energy and glory of Vaishnava sovereigns like Saluva Narasimha and Krishnadeva Raya. There is no point in such generalisations. History disproves the facile doctrine that one religion is invigorating and another debilitating. The charge against Buddhism may be brought with equal

cogency against Christianity on the basis of the pacifism taught by the Jewish Prince of Peace and against such great ideals like *brahmacharya* or celibacy. The position of the detractors of Harsha becomes still more untenable when they hold both Asoka and Harsha as responsible for the decline and fall of the Hindus. It is said that the latter, in spite of his policy of toleration showed a spirit of intolerance in dealing with the non Buddhists, ranged against Huen Tsang. But he had a double duty to perform—to protect an honoured guest and to save a noble soul. The opinion that he was an eclectic is hard to sustain and the diversity of faith among the Pushyabhutis shows not their eclecticism, but the freedom they possessed to act up to their religious convictions. Finally relying on the truth inculcated by their respective denominations and enjoying the consolation it afforded they allowed freedom of conscience not only to themselves but also to their subjects. But a substantial share of the king's patronage accrued to the sect to which he belonged. The slow decline of Buddhism and the growing importance of Brahmanism are patent in the pages of Huen Tsang and that Harsha espoused the cause of the former shows that he was no opportunist. His contribution to literature and advancement of learning exhibits his many sided activity and super human energy. It is difficult to relate him to the art of the age which was a continuation of Gupta art. In a sense he belongs to the age of the Guptas, and his grandmother was a Gupta princess. He revived their empire and continued its cultural tradition. The silver coins 284 in number of Siladitya imitate the Gupta Peacock type though dated in the years of the Harsha era. These are the only coins which may be assigned to him, and the legend on them runs as follows. King Siladitya who has conquered the world conquers heaven. His Nalanda seal gives his title, *Paramabhadraraksa*. He united the independent fragments of the Gupta Empire in the possession of the Guptas of Magadha the Maukharis and the successor of Yasodharman of Malwa and imbued them with the traditions

Neither in-  
tolerant nor  
eclectic

His place in  
literary his-  
tory

His coins

Revival of  
Gupta tradi-  
tions

of the imperial Guptas. He has been compared with Asoka, Samudragupta and Akbar, and like Asoka, with Marcus Aurelius. He is described as "an unbending idealist." That there is idealism in his life admits of no doubt but he was also eminently practical. That Roman imperial Stoic of the second century A.D. was essentially a philosopher who put his thoughts together in his noble *Meditations*, persecuted Christians, and pursued a martial career. Akbar was too much of a rationalist to commit himself to a definite creed. Samudragupta was a brilliant soldier, an accomplished pious and tolerant prince, but no hero as such. Harsha was more religious than philosophic or rational, and his martial qualities did not harden him into a bigot. He was akin to Asoka in fundamentals, and deserves much more than does Kanishka the title of a second Asoka.

## SECTION II THE GUPTAS OF MAGADHA (Continued)

After the death of Harsha in 647, Adityasena built up an empire, celebrated the horse sacrifice, and assumed titles like *Maharajadhiraja* and *Paramabhaktaraja*. His dateless *Aphsad prasasti* is more conventional than informative, and traces the dynastic genealogy from Krishna Gupta. It mentions Kumara Gupta's defeat of Isanavarman Maukhari and his religious suicide at Allahabad by jumping into a specially prepared fire. Though the defeat of the Huns by the "Maukhari" is alluded to, Damodara Gupta's defeat by the latter is omitted. The victory of Mahasena Gupta over Susthitavarman is recorded. Adityasena is eulogised in general terms. He built a Vishnu temple, and his mother, a *matha* (college or monastery), his queen excavating a tank. After him came three rulers—all of them appearing with imperial titles—the last of whom was Jivita Gupta II, whose Deo Baranark (near Gaya) inscription records his continuance of an old grant of land for Sun worship. Therefore the death of Harsha was not followed by anarchy in Northern India but by the empire of Adityasena which must have remained intact to the end of the seventh century.

## SECTION III YASOVARMAN OF KANAUJ

**Vicissitudes of Yasovarman's Fortunes** We have adverted to the political confusion at Kanauj following immediately the death of Harsha but Mr C V Vaidya discredits the story of Arjuna's usurpation and of the Chinese victory.\* The history of Kanauj for nearly a century subsequently is a blank until we come to Yasovarman who may be assigned to the period, 730—740 (or 725—52). His *digvijaya* is described in his protégé Vakpatiraja's Prakrit poem, (*Gaudavaho* or "Death of the King of Gauda or Bengal"). After his victory in Bengal it is said that he marched to the shore of the Bay of Bengal and returned to Kanauj along the Narmada, via Rajputana and Thanesar, bringing with him Vakpatiraja himself who had been the court poet of the defeated king of Bengal and who now received the title of *Kaviraja* from his new patron. The poem was composed after Yasovarman's death though the conventional part of the *digvijaya* may be rejected, the episode of the Gauda conflict is undeniably historical. Yasovarman is regarded as a Maukharī and even as a Maurya, but nothing reliable is known about his lineage. He was in diplomatic relations with China in 731. An undated Nalanda inscription of King Yasovarman describes him as "the Guardian of the World, shining like the Sun, with his foot on the head of all kings, though some would identify him with Yasodharman of Malwa. He is said to have founded Yasovarmanpura (Ghosiava or the town of Bihar). His victorious career was brought to a tragic end between 736 and 747 by Muktipada Lalitaditya of Kashmir. Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* says that, after his defeat, Yasovarman sent the terms of peace to his conqueror with his own name first and that this offended the victor who recommenced hostilities, decapitated Yasovarman, and seized Kanauj. The attribution of some coins to Yasovarman is conjectural.

**His Patronage of Literature** Yasovarman is the author of a drama, the *Ramabhyudaya*, which is lost, and

\* C V Vaidya *History of Medieval Hindu India* I (1921) p. 391

of some poems included in an anthology. He patronised not only Vakpātirāja but also Bhavabhūti, the greatest playwright in Sanskrit after Kalidasa who from the point of view of his learning stands to Kalidasa in the same relation as Milton to Shakespeare. Vakpātirāja and Bhavabhūti obtained the name of Srikantha probably because like Śiva he liked scenes of terror and took his audience to the cremation ground. He was born in Berar and belonged to an orthodox Brahman family of Śoma sacrificers. He was a man who would defy the whole world and would not care if people failed to appreciate his works. He was quite confident that posterity would applaud him. He wrote three plays. The *Mahaviracharita* (the story of Rāma the great hero) is much less esteemed than the *Uttararamacharita* which is an embodiment of the *śokirasa* or sentiment of pathos. It deals with Rāma's divorce of Sita owing to the public scandal resulting from her abduction by Ravana and with the final vindication of her chastity. Its simplicity is in marked contrast with the terribly long compounds of the *Malatimadhata*, which is a comedy of love in ten Acts named after its hero and heroine but full of tragic and terrifying situations. Prof. Winternitz points out some similarities between that comedy and *Pamela* and *Tuliet* and calls Bhavabhūti an Indian Shakespeare. The dramatist's knowledge of the *śāstras* is extensive and profound including his mastery of *Yatayajin's Kama Sutra*. Perhaps his masterpiece is the *Malatimadhata* though some would rate the *Uttararamacharita* even higher. His seriousness goes to such an extent that he dispenses with the *Plushatā* or jester in his plays, which exhibit majesty, deep feeling, sublimity of thought and prodigious learning combined with true poetic power, but it is doubtful if a play like the *Malatimadhata* would succeed on the stage and be a fit an ordinary audience.

**His Successors** Literature mentions Ama, a Jain and Dandaka a reprobate murderer] by his son Dhaja as the successors of Yasovarman but their historicity is not clear. There is however no doubt about the real existence of Vajrasūta who was overthrown by the Kashmirian Javanida who



carried away the throne of Kanauj. The next ruler Indrayudha was defeated about 810 by Dharmapala of Bengal and replaced by Chakrayudha, who was ousted about 816 by Nagabhata II of Bhinmal (Rajputana). Thus Kanauj became the capital of the Gurjara Pratihara.

#### SECTION IV THE GURJARA PRATI HARAS OF BHINMAL AND KANAUJ

**Origin of the Gurjaras** The origin of the Gurjaras and all of the Rajputs in general is a complex problem. The current theory is that most of the Rajput clans like the Gurjaras are descended from the Huns and other allied barbarians who invaded India in the fifth and sixth centuries and ultimately became merged in the indigenous population. Though they are called Kshatriyas in Indian literature and provided with Solar and Lunar genealogies their connection with the Kshatriyas of the earlier period is doubted. The story of the Hindi poet Chand of the twelfth century retelling the origin of the *Agnikula* Rajputs (like the Chahamanas, Chalukyas, Pratiharas and Paramaras) from the *agnikunda* (fire-pit) after a sacrifice at Mount Abu is supposed to suggest the purification of the foreigners before their recognition as Rajputs and Kshatriyas. But some of the Rajput clans associated with the uncivilised Indian tribes like the Gonds and the Bhars are regarded as of indigenous origin. Further certain dynasties founded by Brahmans became later known as Kshatriya dynasties on account of their intermarriages with the Kshatriyas and of their performance of the work of government appropriate to the Kshatriyas. So it is difficult to maintain the racial homogeneity of the Rajputs and connect them directly with the ancient Kshatriyas. The composite character of the Indian population in general forbids such claims to racial purity. Hence it is thought that the Rajputs were a professional group but racially heterogeneous. According to this view the Chahamanas (Chauhans), Pratiharas (Parmars), Paramaras (Pawars) and Chalukyas were foreign Rajputs while the Chandellas (Chandels), Gahadavalas (Gaharwars), Rashtrakutas (Rathors) and Kalachuris or Haihayas were indigenous Rajputs.

We may take the Gujjaras (Pratiharas and probably the other *Agnikula* clans) and examine the view that they were Central Asian nomads who came to India along with the Huns or some time later. The Gujars of the Panjab and Rajputana today have certain characteristics reminiscent of pastoral nomads. There are striking similarities between the coins of the Gurjaras and the Huns. Further, Bana brackets those two tribes in describing the conquests of Prabhakaravardhana. Moreover the Gurjaras are not mentioned in Indian records before the sixth century. The reference in the Tamil epic the *Manimekhalai* to *kuchchara* is indecisive or susceptible of a different interpretation. Each argument is weak in itself. It is rather bold to jump from the characteristics of modern Gujars to those of their distant ancestors. Numismatic influence cannot establish racial homogeneity. The passage in the *Harshacharita* refers to Gujarat as well as the Indus region, Gandhara, Lata and Malwa in connection with the victories of Harsha's father and it would be wrong to suppose that all the vanquished enemies were Gurjaras or tribes allied to them. The other argument from silence may merely indicate the break in tradition caused by the foreign invasions. Still the cumulative effect of the *prima facie* arguments cannot be pool-poohed, and may be regarded as presumptive evidence. Hsien Tsang's reference to the Gujara king as a *kshatriya* is no serious objection, for inscriptional references to royal claims to the maintenance of caste purity may indicate increasing fusion of races and castes. The most serious objection to the current theory that the Rajputs are mostly of foreign origin is that anthropometry does not differentiate between the Rajputs and the Indo-Aryans and that a definite physical type is found today in Kashmir, the Panjab and Rajputana. Sir H. Risley observes: 'It is not probable that waves of foreign conquerors, entering India at a date when the Indo-Aryans had long been an organised community, should have been absorbed by them so completely as to take rank among their most typical representatives (*kshatriyas*), while the form of their heads, the most persistent of racial distinctions, was transformed from the extreme of one type (broad headed) to the extreme of another (long headed)

without leaving any trace of the transitional forms involved in the process. It is no proper answer to this point to say that anthropometry is a science still in its infancy. Therefore our verdict on the question of the foreign origin of many Rajput clans is one of unproven. Mr C V Vaidya goes too far in emphatically repudiating the current theory and stoutly maintaining that the Rajputs of the Rajput period (750—1200) were the descendants of the Vedic Kshatriyas.\*

**Bhoja and his Predecessors** Nagabhata I the founder the Pratihara dynasty, may be conjecturally assigned to 725—740. His alleged defeat of the *mlechchhas* probably refers to that of the Arabs of Sindh on the strength of Huen Tsang's reference to the Gurjara kingdom of Bhinmal, the seat of his power is located there. The fourth ruler was Vatsaraja (775—800) who defeated the king of Bengal and seized his two royal umbrellas but was subsequently vanquished by Dhruva Rashtrakuta and ultimately by the king of Bengal himself. His successor Nagabhata II (800—834), rehabilitated his dynastic fortunes, exterminated the line of Yasovarman and removed his capital to Kanauj. In spite of the defeat inflicted on him by Govinda III Rashtrakuta he maintained his hold on Kanauj and was succeeded by Ramabhadra (834—840), the father of Bhoja.

Mihna Bhoja, under whom his dynasty was most powerful was primarily responsible for the extent of his empire as his predecessors had to maintain their precarious position against the hostility of the Palas and the Rashtrakutas. It

<b>Mihna</b> <b>Bhoja</b> (c 840— c 890)	was he who turned that three cornered struggle in favour of his own dynasty. Though the details of his wars are not known, his dominions included the Panjab, east of the Sutlej the United Provinces, Rajputana and the Gwalior region (the Chandella ruler of Bundelland being his feudatory) and probably Malwa, Gujarat and Kathiawar. The last three regions certainly formed part of the empire of his successor. Thus the Gurjara Pratihara Empire could compare favourably with that of Harsha or of the Guptas. For more than half a century such an imperial position remained intact. Our
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limited knowledge of Bhoja's reign is derived from his inscriptions. His silver coins are numerous and indicate a long reign and an extensive empire. But like the Hun pieces, they exhibit Sassanian influence. Bhoja's title of *Adivaraḥa* appears on them, his other surname being *Prabhāsa* or 'Splendour'. He was a worshipper of Vishnu and the Sun. He is credited with the foundation of Bhojapura. The Arab traveller Sulaiman writing in 801, says "The king of Jurz (Gurjaras) maintains numerous forces, and no other Indian prince has so fine a cavalry. He has great riches and his camels and horses are numerous. There is no country in India more safe from robbers." \* Sankaravarman Utpala of Kashmir is said to have checked the power of Bhoja, but we do not know how far the claim is well founded.

There is no doubt that Mahendrapala was the worthy son of his illustrious father. He held firm control over the empire erected by the latter, and perhaps made some additions to it. The inscriptions of his eighth and ninth regnal years at Gaya and of his thirteenth year in the Rujshahi District show his conquest of Magadha and Northern Bengal. He was the disciple and patron of Rajasekhara, the great poet and playwright. The latter was born in the Dakhan, and after serving Mahendrapala he migrated to the Kalachuri court and then returned to Kanauj in the time of Mahipala I. He was a master of Sanskrit and Prakrit. His plays *Balaramayana* and *Balabharata* or *Prachandapandita* deal with epic themes. The *Viddhasala bhanjika* (Broken Doll or Statue) provides ample scope for mirth as its heroine is a girl appearing in masculine dress. The *Karpuramanjari*, named after the heroine, is his *magnum opus* "one of the best comedies in Indian Literature. It is the only extant well known drama entirely composed in Prakrit." † His plays are full of proverbs and contain many

\* Elliot H. M. and Doynson J. *The History of India as Told by its own Historians* I (1867) p. 4

† Macdonell, *op. cit.* p. 112

references to the customs of the age hence then historical value is great His *Kavyamimamsa* is a work on poetics and his *Bluvanaśa* deals with geography For the social history and geography of ancient India he is an author who cannot be neglected Mahendrapala was succeeded by his son Bhoja II (908—914) who was followed by his half brother Mahipala I during whose reign the Gurjara Pratihara Empire began to decline

## SECTION V THE MAITRAKAS OF VALABHI THE GURJARAS OF BROACH and THE CHAPOTKATAS OF ANHILVAD

**Valabhi** The Maitrakas seem to be foreigners who came to India along with the Huns the dynasty was founded by Bhataka Senapati who towards the close of the fifth century carved out a principality in Kathiawar and Gujarat with Valabhi (mod Valsa) as the capital The first famous ruler was Siladitya I (605—611) identified with the great Buddhist king mentioned by Huen Tsang Dhruvasena II fought with Haisha of Kanauj and became his vassal and son in law After the latter's death Dhruvasena IV the greatest member of the dynasty assumed imperial titles and came into conflict with the Gurjaras of Broach **Bhatti** the grammarian poet one of the Mahakavis wrote his work called the *Bhattikavya* or *Pavanavādha* at Valabhi during this reign it is an epic which illustrates the rules of Sanskrit grammar and poetics Some regard Bhattacharya as its author The date of the last ruler of Valabhi Siladitya VII is 766 and the dynasty was put an end to and Valabhi destroyed about 770 by the Arabs of Sindh (this is supported by numismatic evidence) at the instance of Rana a disloyal citizen Though a small kingdom at the height of its power it included South Kathiawar parts of Gujarat Cutch a part of Malwa Broach and Surat Its kings patronised Buddhism and using brackets Valabhi and Nalanda as great educational centres It is significant that seven kings bore the name of Siladitya though some of the other rulers were Saivas

**Broach** The Gurjara dynasty of Broach, consisting of six rulers was established towards the end of the sixth century (580) by Dadda I who calls himself a *samanta* or

feudatory. Its territory extended from Southern Gujarat to the Narmada and occasionally to the Tapti. It was constantly fighting with the Maithakas and the Chalukyas though the third king, Dadda II, helped Dhruvasena II against Harsha. The last king, Jayabhata III, ruled at least till 736, and the kingdom disappeared with the rise of the Rashtrakutas though the name Gujarat, the country of the Gurjaras, has become permanent.

**Anhilvad** Another Gurjara dynasty called Chhapotkata or Chavada founded Anahilapataka or Anhilvad and established itself there in 746. It rose in importance after the destruction of Valabhi. It was subordinate to the Gurjara Pratiharas and consisted of six princes. It was superseded in the tenth century by the Solankis or Chalukyas of Anhilvad.

## SECTION VI THE ARAB CONQUEST OF SINDH

**Sindh before the Arab Invasion** The Rai dynasty of Sindh consisting of six princes ruled from about 485 to 622 and Rai Sahasi II, the last of the line, was followed by Chach, his Brahman minister, who usurped the throne and married the widow of the late king. The story of the new dynasty is dealt with in the *Chach nama*, a historical work in Persian written early in the thirteenth century. The usurpation provoked provincial revolts which were put down by Chach, who extended his kingdom, became master not only of Sindh but of portions of the Panjab and the whole of Baluchistan and reigned for forty years (622—662), with his capital at Alor. After him his brother Chandai ruled for seven years (662—669), and the latter's death was followed by dynastic quarrels and division of the kingdom for thirty years (670—700) the two sons of Chach governed the partitioned kingdom from Alor and Brahmanabad. It was only about 700 that the kingdom was reunited under Dahir, the younger brother. Though the kingdom of Sindh was extensive and powerful on the eve of its conquest by the Arabs its real strength had been impaired by the consequences of Chach's usurpation, by its later partition, and by its wars with the neighbouring states. Moreover, the Buddhist monks who possessed much political power were opposed to the Brahman regime. In short,

Khalif was sent to Debal to punish the offenders, and there resulted a fight between Sindh and the general in charge of that expedition, and after the defeat of the latter, he was killed. This shameful failure provoked Hajjaj into sending a second punitive expedition under Muhammad bin Kasim, who was instructed to conquer Sindh. He was a young man of brilliant parts and of greater promise. He captured Debal (712), and moving further, fought a great battle at Rawar in which Dahar lost his life. He followed up his success by taking Brahmanabad and Multan (713). He contemplated an expedition against Kanauj, but before he could execute it, the Khalif ordered his execution (715) for reasons about which there are only extravagant stories.

**Subsequent Fortunes of Sindh.** Sindh was held for the Khalif by his Governors, some of whom pursued an active policy of consolidation of Arab rule in the conquered region and of expeditions to various parts of India. We have noted the destruction of Valabhi. At the same time, we find Indian princes claiming victories over the Arabs of Sindh. While the Gurjara Pratiharas were hostile to them, the Rashtrakutas befriended them. The Governors of Sindh failed to exploit their initial success and became independent of the Khalif about 870 simultaneously with the decline of the latter's authority. In the tenth century, Sindh was divided into two chief kingdoms, Multan or Upper Sindh and Mansurah or Lower Sindh, and the recorded victories of the Amirs of Multan may be explained in the light of the decline of the Pratihara Empire of Kanauj. In the next century, Mahmud of Ghazni conquered Multan (1005) and Mansurah (1025). Though Upper Sindh continued to be attached to the Turkish Empire, Lower Sindh became practically independent under a Rajput dynasty (the Sumras) after the death of Mahmud of Ghazni (1030).

**Character of the Conquest** The Arab conquest of Sindh is regarded as "a triumph without results." It is spoken of as a failure in so far as the initial success was not pushed forth, and no great empire was founded by the Arabs in India. The initial triumph was due to the striking ability of Muhammad bin Kasim coupled with the Khalif's support to

his expedition the news of which was received with delight by the internal and external foes of Dahai. But Hasam's vigorous policy of expansion was not seriously pursued by the Governors of Sindh and the Khalifs became gradually indifferent to the fortunes of their Indian province. Sindh was not a region rich enough to supply its conqueror with the sinews of war for further territorial expansion. Above all the Karkotas of Kashmir and the Gurjara Pratiharas of Kanauj were strong enough to resist aggression from Sindh. Though the Arabs were not deprived of their first and last conquest when we remember their wonderful military success in other parts of Asia and Africa the comparatively insignificant results they achieved in India certainly stand out as a marked contrast.

**Its Effects** The conquest in its earlier stages was very destructive to life property and public monuments. The conquerors were a foreign garrison concerned only with political

**On India** and military affairs. The lands seized by them were cultivated by the conquered who besides the land tax ( $\frac{2}{5}$ ths of the produce for irrigated lands and  $\frac{1}{4}$ th for the rest) had to pay the *jizya* (poll tax on Hindus). The Kazi (Muslim judge) decided cases between Hindus and Muslims according to the Koranic law. In many other ways the distinction between the believers and unbelievers, the rulers and the ruled, was emphasised. Still the Arabs left many matters to the *panchajats* of the Hindus and to local magnates. They were much less intolerant in their religious policy than the later Turkish rulers. There are instances of their encouraging worship in temples in order to increase the public revenue as at Multan. Demolished temples were allowed to be rebuilt. Moreover the conquerors married Indian women and adopted Indian customs and dress and gradually a new community of Indian Muslims came into existence. Further commerce was promoted. Multan and the sea ports became centres of Chinese, Ceylonese and Central Asian trade.

Though the conquest did not modify Indian life permanently or enrich Indian culture the extensive empire of the

\* R. C. Majumdar *The Great Indian Civilisation* (1931) pp 51-52



Arabs facilitated the diffusion in it of Indian thought and science which ultimately reached Europe. Besides the adoption of the so called Arabic numerals the conquerors learnt Indian astronomy and medicine. There is the recorded instance of an Arab astronomer studying the Indian science at Benares for ten years. The *Charaka Samhita* and the *Panchatantra* were translated into Arabic. The monasticism and other aspects of Buddhism were adopted by the Sufis, who were influenced also by some schools of Hindu philosophy. Many Indian scholars went to Baghdad and enjoyed the patronage of the Khalifs in the eighth century. Two Indians, Manka and Saleh were the court physicians of the Khalif Harun al Rashid (786—809), who started "the golden age of Islam," which came to an end in 847. So long as Sindh was a part of the Arab Empire, the flow of Indian ideas to its headquarters was unimpeded, its independence from the last quarter of the ninth century was prejudicial to this cultural contact with Western Asia.

#### \* SECTION VII. THE TURKI SHAHIS AND THE BRAHMANA, SHAHIS OF KABUL AND OHIND

The Turki Shahis were most probably the descendants of Kanishka who, after many vicissitudes of fortune, secured an independent position south of the Hindu Kush in Kapisa, "the rump of the once mighty Kushan Empire."\* Huen Tsang describes the king of Kapisa as a Kshatriya, and the Shahis were the descendants of the Kushans who had become completely Hinduised in the time of Vasudeva. They possessed Kabul and Und (Ohind on the Indus near Attock). For more than one hundred and fifty years from 700 they resisted admirably the Arab attempt to seize Kabul. About 850 the last of them named Lagatuman was overthrown by his Brahman minister Kallar (referred to as Lalliya by Kulhana), who founded the Brahmana (also called Hindu) Shahi dynasty. In spite of its resistance, the Arabs captured Kabul in 870 with the result that the Shahis transferred their capital to the Udabhandia on Und, the original capital of the Turki Shahis Kallar (850—870)

\* H. C. Ray, *The Dynastic History of Northern India* I (1931) p. 61

was followed by Samant (870—900) These two rulers experienced the hostility of Kashmir but probably enjoyed the friendship of the Gurjara Pratiharas Perhaps the attitude of Kashmir now towards the Shahis different from that of Muktapada Lalitaditya in the first half of the eighth century was partly responsible for the fall of Kabul in 870

## SECTION VIII THE KARKOTAS AND THE UTPALAS OF KASHMIR

• **Kalhana's Rajatarangini** The almost complete lack of inscriptions for the history of Kashmir is more than compensated by the *Rajatarangini* of Kalhana supplemented by coins and remains of monuments and Chinese and Muslim notices That greatest Indian historian lived in an unfortunate period of Kashmir history his father being a minister of Harsha the Nelo of Kashmir He knew his country and its public affairs very well and had opportunities for studying its geography and topography He understood the inwardness of the contemporary history of Kashmir and his interest in antiquarian remains was great His historical studies commenced with Bilhana's *Vilramankacharita* Bana's *Harshacharita* and the numerous chronicles of Kashmir

**Sources** abridged and unabridged whose many discrepancies and errors are deplored by him (He went further and explored the archaeological remains with so much care that his description of them has guided modern exploration and research He deciphered the inscriptions available to him and did not neglect even the old coins of Kashmir Thus he gives us some idea of his workshop though not a critical survey of his authorities He had no notion of the historical method known to us today but it is an agreeable surprise that the student of Bilhana and Bana analysed literary inscriptional, numismatic and monumental evidences before attempting a history of his country He finished his work in 1150 it gives a connected account of the dynasties of Kashmir For

**Defects** the early period the popular legends are given without any comment and one Ranaditya is said to have ruled for 300 years Manifest impossibilities exaggerations and superstitious beliefs (like *abhichara* or

magical operation) are reproduced without a mark of doubt or critical misgiving (Sir A. Stein). In some respects Kalhana was extremely credulous and we may suppose that he was led away by the legendary character of the early records of Kashmir. From the seventh century his account becomes sober though it is occasionally vitiated by over statements and his chronology becomes tenable though Sir A. Stein, the first English translator of the *Rajatarangini* thinks that twenty five years should be added in the light of the Chinese evidence to make it acceptable but Mr. C. V. Vaidya holds that there is no need for this correction. From 837 we get correct dates

**Merits** in the years of the *Laukika era* (3076—5 B. C.)—the date of composition of the work is given in the Saka year as well—and from 855 the date of accession of Avantivarman Utpala the year month and day of the beginning and end of each reign are supplied and the narrative is completely reliable. The contemporary part of Kalhana's history is based on his own direct knowledge and on that of his acquaintances. On the whole he exhibits an impartial and independent outlook; he is fair even to Harsha. He does not give an one-sided account but dwells on the merits and defects of the makers of history and their coadjutors. His honesty is beyond doubt. Honesty in an historian has (not unjustly) been called a forerunner of critical judgment. His general accuracy is equally unimpeachable. Though he fails necessarily to conform to our present day standards in some respects he deserves to be called a historian as distinct from an annalist or chronicler. *pace* Dr. A. B. Keith.

**The Karkotas** The isolation of Kashmir was broken now and then before the seventh century by its inclusion in the Maurya, Kushan and Hun Empires. The founder of the Karkota dynasty was Durlabhavardhana (626—662) claiming descent from the Karkota Nagas of South India. Hsuen Tsang notes that Taxila and a few other places belonged to Kashmir which was in a prosperous condition. He says that though the king was favourable to Buddhist monks the kingdom was devoted to Brahmanism and full of Brahmanical monuments. The extension of Kashmir to Taxila and the Salt Range was probably responsible for the change of the Shahi capital from

was truly imperial. He is said to have gone as far as Bengal. Though towards the close of his reign, he became greedy and taxed his subjects heavily, he was a great patron of learning who revived the study of Patanjali's *Mahabhashya* with the help of scholars like Kshura from outside Kashmir. Kalhana says that "the king searched for and collected all scholars to such an extent that in the land of other kings there was a dearth of learned men". The names of many scholars are mentioned. Damodaragupta, the chief minister and author of the *Kuttanimita*, which deals with the harlot's profession with a view to safeguarding men's morals, Udbhata and Vaman, writers on poetics, etc. Under the ephemeral successors of Jayapida, Kashmir lost its foreign possessions and was reduced to its original limits.

**The Utpalas** The Utpalas were related to the Karkotas by marriage, and the first and most distinguished member of the dynasty was Avantivarman (855—883) who seized the throne and established his power. He eschewed an aggressive foreign policy and concentrated on internal improvement in order to efface the consequences of misgovernment during the period of the later Karkotas. He curbed the growing power of the turbulent *Damaras* (rural aristocracy). He was a good Vaishnava and his highly esteemed Prime Minister, Sura, was a pious Saiva. The public works of this reign included the foundation of Surapura (named after the minister) and Avantipura (named after the king) many Siva temples, inferior in size to those of Lalitaditya, and *mathas* and above all, the construction of a huge reservoir for irrigation and for preventing the devastation caused by floods, by changing the course of the Jhelum and of stone embankments along the new course of the river, thanks to Suyya, an engineer of wonderful ability. Avantivarman was a great patron of learning. At his court flourished Anandavardhana, the author of the *Dhvanyaloka*, a commentary on the *Dhvani Karikas* (supposed by some to have been composed by the commentator himself) which expounds the theory that *dhvani* or suggestion is the characteristic of genuine poetry. Sivasvamin, the author of the Buddhist epic *Kapphanabhayudaya*,

Ratnakara who wrote the epic poem, *Haravijaya* and Abhinanda, the versifier of Bana's *Kadambari*.

The successor of Avantivarman was Sankaravarman (883—902), who fought his way to the throne and attempted to revive the empire of the Karkotas. He claims to have checked the power of Mihna Bhoja probably some feudatory of the latter was defeated. Besides a few small annexations, his aggressive policy does not seem to have been successful. He reorganised the fiscal system on oppressive lines, and forced labour of various kinds was exacted from the poor people. He ever resumed the villages granted to temples and paid them a fixed allowance. Weights and measures were tampered with in order to increase the state revenue. As a measure of economy he avoided the company of scholars. But he built two Siva temples and the city of Sankarapura, besides patronising the poet Bhallata, the author of a gnomic *Sataka* named after him and of the lexicon, *Padmamanyari*. He died on his return from an expedition.

#### SECTION IX. NEPAL AND ASSAM

**Nepal** Nepal was a part of Asoka's Empire and a friendly neighbour to the Guptas under Samudragupta. During the sixth century a Licchhavi dynasty was established there. Sivadeva was gradually ousted from the throne by Amsuvarman Thakuri (625—642). The identification of the era used in his inscriptions is not quite certain, if it is the Harsha era, it is probable that he was feudatory to Harsha. Some regard him as subordinate to Tibet. He was an able ruler who held Central Nepal. His successor's reign witnessed the restoration of the Licchhavi dynasty. Nepal played a part in the suppression of Arjuna, the usurper of Harsha's throne after his death. In 879 the civil war in Tibet provided the opportunity for the overthrow of its control over Nepal which had been probably established after the reign of Amsuvarman. This emancipation from Tibetan yoke was achieved by Raghavadeva. Buddhism was introduced into Nepal in the time of Asoka and in the seventh century Mahayanism flourished there.

**Assam.** Assam (ancient Kamarupa or Pragjyotisha), with its capital at Pragjyotishapura near Gauhati, was not

subordinate to the Maurya Empire Under Samudragupta, its status was like that of Nepal, but there is evidence of his influence in Assam One of the later Guptas of Magadha defeated Susthitarvarman The dynasty of Bhagadatta (traditional ancestor), or of Pushyavarman (historical founder) held sway in Assam from about 350 to 650, the last member of which being Harsha's intimate friend and feudatory, Bhaskaravarman whose court was visited in 643 by Hsien Tsang who describes him as a Brahman (probably a mistake for Brahmanist) and his country as containing no Buddhist monastery Buddhism had so far made no progress there From about 650 to 800, the line of Salastambha remained in power, and was superseded by Pralambha (800—829) His successor Harjara (829—875) assumed imperial titles and like him his son Vanamala (875—900) was a Saiva

## SECTION X THE PALAS OF BENGAL AND BIHAR

• **Retrospect** In the latter half of the sixth century Gauda or Bengal became gradually independent of the Guptas, and the Maukharis came into conflict with the Gaudas who became powerful under Sasanka the bitter enemy of Buddhism who uprooted the Bodhi tree at Bodhi Gaya But his power was checked by Harsha and Bhaskaravarman of Assam though he maintained his position in Orissa till 637 In the second half of the seventh century Bengal and Bihar were under the Guptas of Magadha and the Khadgas of Samatata We have seen that Adityasena revived the Gupta Empire About 700 Adisura is said to have re-established Brahmanical orthodoxy in Bengal by importing "five Brahmins and five Kayasthas" from Kanauj In the first half of the eighth century, the anarchical state of Bengal facilitated its conquest by Yasovarman of Kanauj, who seems to have defeated the Khadga king as well The Kashmirian imperialists, Muktapida and Jayapida are said to have interfered in the affairs of Bengal and Bihar, other invasions of the country are on record Therefore the anarchy said to have preceded the establishment of the Pala dynasty in Bengal is confirmed by the warlike activities of some of the other Indian states

**Gopala I** The chronology of the Palas has been much discussed and we may adopt the scheme of Dr H C Ray \* Gopala I (c 765—c 769) elected to the throne of Bengal saved the country from the anarchy of the previous half century. He does not seem to have belonged to any royal family. He must have established his dynasty in virtue of his services in times of trouble. The imperial efforts of his successor indicate the solidity of Gopala's work. We have no information about the duration of his reign. He was a Buddhist who founded the University of Odantapuri (Bihar town) near Nalanda.

**Dharmapala** Gopala's son and successor Dharmapala (c 769—c 815) overthrew Indrayudha and put his own nominee Chakrayudha on the throne of Kanauj. But his success was nullified by the conquest of Kanauj by Nagabhata II Gurjara Pratihara. The latter was however defeated by Govinda III Rashtrakuta who is said to have triumphed over Dharmapala as well. The Pala imperialism was thus scotched for the time being. Still their kingdom extended at least from Pataliputra to Rajshahi as inscriptions prove. The chronology of the struggle for Kanauj is to some extent confusing and it is difficult to reconcile all the available data. Scholars give different dates for the kings involved in that struggle. Dharmapala assumed the title of *Paramasagala* (a great Buddhist) and founded the University of Vikramasila on the southern bank of the Ganges, its exact location being unknown. His name is associated with the great (Buddhist) temple and monastery at Paharpur (Rajshahi District, Bengal) a unique type of architecture—the prototype of the temples of Further India, Burma and Indonesia. †

**Devapala** Devapala (815—854) the son of Dharmapala is represented as an imperialist in his inscriptions. It is probable that he took advantage of the death of Govinda III Rashtrakuta and the consequent internal troubles in his kingdom and of Nagabhata II Pratihara followed by the weak rule of Ramabhadra. For a moment he regained the imperial position that his father had secured for a short time. But with

\* op cit I pp 234 B.

† See J. Cumming *Pertaining India's Past* (1939) p 46.

the accession of Mihira Bhoja the brilliant period of Gurjara imperialism began and lasted down to the death of Mahendrapala in 908, and the Palas had to give up their political ambitions. The Nalanda copper plate of Devapala records his grant of five villages in his thirty ninth and last regnal year at the request of Balaputradeva, the Sailendra Emperor of Suvarnadvipa (Sumatra), for the maintenance of a *vihara* built by him at Nalanda, after 'having realised the transitoriness of wealth and attracted by the excellences of Nalanda. Like his predecessor, Devapala was a staunch Buddhist, and his Nalanda record throws some light on his friendly relations with the Sailendra imperial dynasty of Sumatra and Java. The next ruler, Vīrabhāpala I (854—857), was more ascetic than royal, and on his abdication his son Narayanapala (857—911) came to the throne. The inscriptions of Mahendrapala Gurjara in Bihar and Northern Bengal indicate the territorial losses of the Palas who suffered eclipse during the ascendancy of Mihira Bhoja and his son.

#### SECTION XI THE EASTERN GANGAS OF KALINGANAGARA

The Ganga princes of Kalinga trace their descent from Kamarnadeva I who left Kolar (Mysore) and conquered the territory around Mahendragiri. The first reliable date available is 1038 for the seventeenth king, and the total of reign periods for the first sixteen kings is 301½ years. So the foundation of the Ganga dynasty may be assigned to 1038—301½ = 736½, i.e., the middle of the eighth century. The earlier Ganga grants are dated in the years of the Ganga era, but when it was inaugurated we do not know. Though the rulers mentioned in them often appear with imperial titles, their achievements are unknown. Their capital was Kalinganagara (Mukhalingam, near Parlakimedi, Ganjam District) and they worshipped Gokarnesvara on the Mahendragiri, their *lanohana* or crest being the bull. We know more about the Eastern Gangas from the eleventh century.

#### SECTION XII THE WESTERN CHALUKYAS OF BADAMI

**Origin** The later inscriptions of the Chalukyas and Bilhana, the author of the *Vikramanāccharita* and court poet of Vikramaditya VI Chalukya, regard Avodhya as their



ancestral home But this statement is rejected on the ground that Chalukya is not a Sanskrit word though Bilhana transforms it into Chalukya and derives it from *Chalula* (hollow of the hand) narrating the story of Brahma creating the first Chalukya from the hollow of his hand, when he was performing *sandhya* at the instance of Indra who had requested him to produce a warrior in order to put down irreligious people in the Kaliyuga Dr Hoernle derives the word from a Turki root *chap*=gallop, and *chapaul*=a plundering raid. One point worthy of note is that the name Pulakesin is found among the Chalukyas and the Chapas, the latter belonging to the Gurjara group Dr Rice speculates that the word Chalukya resembles Seleukia and that the bitter wars between the Chalukyas and the Pallavas may be explained as the continuation in South India of the quarrels of the Seleucidae and the Arsacidae (Parthians) on the banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates, the Pallavas being regarded as Parthians In these circumstances, it is best to take the Chalukyas or Solankis as allied to the Gurjaras

**Pulakesin II** The Aihole (Bijapur District, Bombay) inscription of Pulakesin II is a long record dealing with the Chalukyas down to that ruler Though the predecessors of Pulakesin I (c 547—c 567) are mentioned he was the historical founder of the dynasty He captured Vatapi (Badami, Bijapur District) and performed the horse-sacrifice His son Kirtivarman I (567—599) conquered Banavasi and the Konkan, and was succeeded by his younger brother, Mangalesa (598—608), who seized Revathi dvipa (Redi promontory, Ratnagiri District, Bombay). The next ruler, Pulakesin II (608—642), the son of Kirtivarman who ascended the throne after defeating his opponents—Mangalesa and his allies, Appayika and Govinda According to the Aihole record, he conquered the Kadambas and the Western Gangas, the Konkan by a naval victory, Harsha, the Latas, Malavas and Gurjaras (thus obtaining "the sovereignty over the three Maharashtra—Berar, Maharashtra and Kuntala—with their nine and ninety thousand villages"), the Kalingas and Kosalas, Pishtapura (Pithapuram, Godavari District), and Kanchi whose king "had opposed the rise of his power" He is said to have crossed the Kaveri and

caused great prosperity to the Cholas, Keralas and Pandyas. His *diguṇaya* is to a certain extent conventional but there is no doubting the wide range of his warlike activities. The inscription was composed by Ravikīrti in connection with his dedication of a stone temple to Jinendia and the author mentions his acquisition of fame as great as that of Kalidasa and Bharavi. It is true that Ravikīrti has a place in Sanskrit literary history which is indebted to this record as it fixes the lower limit of Kalidasa's date and testifies to his fame in the first half of the seventh century. The inscription is dated in the years of the Kaliyuga and Śaka eras corresponding to A.D. 634.

**His Imperial Position** From other inscriptions we learn that Pulakesin I performed many sacrifices. Kirtivarman I beautified Badami and Mangalesa built a Vishnu temple there and assumed the title of *Paramabhogavata* (a great devotee of Vishnu). Pulakesin II's titles are *Satyasraya*, *Prithivīvallabha*, *Paramesvara*, *Paramamahesvara* etc. In virtue of his extensive conquests he became the most powerful ruler of South India who decisively checked the ambition of Harsha to conquer the South. But his conquest of the whole of South India is only a nominal claim. The Pallavas lost a portion of their possessions in the Andhradesa and the Eastern Chalukya Viceroyalty was founded in 611. An eighth century Pallava inscription says that Mahendia varman I vanquished his enemies at Pullalura (Pallur near Kanchi) and this might be one of the episodes of the Chalukya-Pallava contest. But there is no denying Pulakesin II's defeat of the Pallavas and his annexation of a part of their dominions.

About 625 Pulakesin II sent an embassy to Khusru II of Persia according to a Muslim historian and the return Persian embassy is apparently painted in Cave I of Ajanta.

Persian but this interpretation of the picture is con-  
Embassy' troverted by some scholars who regard it as  
representing Bacchanalian (drinking) scenes of  
the type that recurs in Buddhist art from the early Kūṣiṇ  
period onwards.\*

In 641 Hsien Tsang visited Pulakesin II probably at Nasik in the course of his South Indian tour. He says: "The inhabitants (of Maharashtra) were proud spirited and warlike grateful for favours and revengeful for wrongs self sacrificing

Hsien Tsang	towards suppliants in distress and sanguinary to death with any who treated them insultingly Their martial heroes went into conflict intoxicated and their war-elephants were also made drunk before an engagement. Relying on the strength of his heroes and elephants the king treated neighbouring countries with contempt. The benevolent sway of this king reached far and wide and his vassals served him with perfect loyalty *
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**Pulakesin II's Defeat and Death** Before his death in 642 Pulakesin drank the cup of misery to the dregs. Narasimhavarman I Pallava defeated the Chalukya army at Vanimangalam (near Kanchi) and other places and despatched an expedition to Badami under Siruttonda Nayanar who captured and destroyed it and erected a pillar of victory there. This Pallava achievement is confirmed by an inscription of Narasimhavarman at Badami itself. "Pulakesin died" and political confusion followed with the result that an interregnum seems to have occurred from 642 to 655. Thus Narasimhavarman conquered the conqueror of his own father and of Harsha.

**His Successors** Vikramaditya I (655—680) the son of Pulakesin II rehabilitated his dynastic fortunes after the anarchy of thirteen years. The Gadval (the Nizam's State) plates of his 20th regnal year (674) say that at the time of the grant recorded in them the Chalukya army was camping on the southern bank of the Kaveri at Urigapura (Ururayur Trichinopoly). Besides the usual Chalukya titles he is styled *Rajamalla* because he destroyed the *Mahamalla* (Narasimhavarman I) family. He is described as *Ranarasika* (one who enjoys fighting) and as the conqueror of Kanchi and of Isvara Potaraja (Paramesvaravarman I). But Pallava inscriptions record a victory at Peruvalanallur (near Trichinopoly) and Vikramaditya's flight covered only by a rag thus indicating that the Chalukya was not invariably

victorious. But the very fact that he marched as far as Trichinopoly confirms his capture of Kanchi and the general success of the expedition undertaken by him to wipe off the disgrace of defeat during the closing years of Pulakesin II's reign. The next important ruler was Vikramaditya II (733—746) who, according to the copper plates of his successor Kirtivarman II, 'defeated his natural foe, entered the Pallava capital Kanchi without destroying it, and restored to the Rajasimhesvara and other temples heaps of gold and rubies which had been taken away from them. This statement is confirmed by Vikramaditya's inscription at Kanchi. Nandivarman Pallavamalla, though defeated about 740, soon recovered his capital. There is no justification for regarding the Chalukya victory as 'the beginning of the end of the Pallava supremacy. Kirtivarman II (746—753) was the last of the Chalukyas of Badami whose power was put an end to by Dantidurga Rashtrakuta, whose dynasty lasted until the restoration of the Chalukyas in 973.

• **Religion** • During the period of about two centuries of early Chalukya rule, Brahmanism slowly but decisively superseded Buddhism. The Vedic religion received increasing support from the kings and the people, and leaders of thought in India began to expound the theory of the infallibility of the *Vedas* and emphasise the efficacy of the Vedic injunctions. Jainism became popular towards the close of the period and Vikramaditya II patronised it.

• **Art** The Buddhist caves of Ajanta are important for their sculptures and particularly for their paintings in Cave I—the Temptation of the Buddha and the Persian embassy being remarkable. There are good Buddhist cave sculptures at Aurangabad and Nasik. But the Brahmanical cave sculptures illustrating the orthodox creed are characteristic of the early Chalukya period. At Ellora, near Aurangabad, the famous sculptures are Ravana under Mount Kailasa, Dancing Siva, and Vishnu in his Narasimha avatar killing the demon-king Hiranyakasipu. At Badami the Narasimha and Varaha avatars of Vishnu are admirable. Structural temples of the age exist at Ahole, Badami and Pattakadal (near Badami). The most important edifice is the Virupaksha temple with

sculptures illustrating the *Ramayana* and exhibiting the influence of Pallava art it was built about 740 in imitation of the Kailasanatha temple at Kanchi. The boat symbol was the crest of the dynasty.

### SECTION XIII THE RASHTRAKUTAS OF MALKHED

**Origin** The tradition of the Yadava descent of the Rashtrakutas of Manyakheta (Malkhed in the Nizam's State about 60 miles south-east of Sholapur) originated in the ninth century. Their descent from the Rathors of Rajputana is negatived by the much earlier existence of the Southern Rashtrakutas. Their Telugu origin is based on the word Reddi being regarded as a corruption of Rashtra, but the possibility of such a change in the Telugu language is denied. Moreover, the Reddis were a political power only in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. A plausible view is that the Rashtrakutas were Marathas descended from the Rashtrikas who figure in the inscriptions of Asoka, but the latter were not confined to Maharashtra but extended to the Kannada country as well. Kannada was the language of the Rashtrakutas who patronised, not Marathi but Kannada Literature. Though their racial origin is difficult to decide—they are generally regarded as indigenous Rajputs—, their original home was Lattaluru (Latur, the Nizam's State) where Kannada is spoken today. As the ancestors of Dantidurga were connected with Ellichpur (Berar) they may be supposed to have migrated to that place from Latur, about one hundred and fifty miles south of Ellichpur.\*

**Dantidurga** Indra I married a Chalukya princess of Gujarat and strengthened his position in Berar, and his son Dantidurga (745—756) created the nucleus of Rashtrakuta power by conquering the territories of the Gurjaras of Broach and of the Chalukyas of Gujarat, after concluding an alliance with Nandivarman Pallavamalla. He took the next step by defeating Kirtivarman II Chalukya in 753 and annexing the northern part of Maharashtra. He is also said to have conducted an expedition to Malwa. He was a man of considerable energy and foresight who understood

\* A. S. Altekar *The Rashtrakutas and their Times* (1934) pp. 15-27

the weakness of his victims and employed the resources of war and diplomacy for the consummation of his ambition. He was an orthodox Hindu who made many gifts on holy days and at sacred places. He died about the age of thirty. Malkhed became the Rashtrakuta capital only in the time of Amoghavarsha I. We do not know the name of their original capital, there are suggestions favouring Nasik, Ellorapur or Ellora.

**Krishna I and Govinda II** The successor of Dantidurga who died without a male heir was his father's brother Krishna I (756—775) and the theory of the ejection of the nephew by the uncle on account of his maladministration is untenable. He completed the conquest of the Western Chalukyas about 760, invaded the Western Ganga Kingdom under Sripurusha in 768 and sent his son Govinda against the Eastern Chalukya ruler, Vishnuvardhana IV, in 770. Thus the southern portion of the Western Chalukya territory and a part of the Eastern Chalukya dominions were annexed. South Konkan was Krishna's last conquest. He nearly trebled his inheritance, established the predominance of his dynasty in the Dekhan, and cleared the path of his successors to trans-Vindhyan adventures. The importance of his reign is increased by his contribution to architecture—the Kailasa temple hewn out of a big rock at Ellora (the Nizam's State) and described as "the most marvellous architectural freak in India" by far the most extensive and sumptuous of the rock-cut shrines, "one of the wonders of the world, a work of which any nation might be proud, and an honour to the king under whose patronage it was executed".\* Krishna I was followed by Govinda II (775—780) whose vicious life and neglect of royal duties resulted in his supersession by his younger brother Dhruva.

**Dhruva** The reign of Dhruva (780—794) witnessed the defeat and imprisonment of Sivamaru II, Western Ganga, the annexation of his dominions and the appointment of a Viceroy to govern them. He led an expedition to Kanchi against Dantivarman Pallava. It seems that these military activities were intended to punish the Ganga and Pallava

\* Smith, *The Early History of India* (1924) pp. 445 and 447.

rulers for their support to Govinda II against Dhruva on the eve of his usurpation. His intervention in Northern Indian politics resulting in the discomfiture of Vatsaraja Gurjara increased the imperial prestige of the Rashtrakutas but no territorial gains accrued to them. Its object seems to be not conquest but the chastisement of that Gurjara for his aid to Govinda II. All the punitive expeditions of the reign were successful and the kingdom was saved from the danger of Govinda II's continuance by the decisive vigour of Dhruva who was one of the best Rashtrakuta sovereigns and who showed his wisdom further in choosing his third son Govinda as heir apparent.

**Govinda III** In spite of his father's efforts to avoid a war of succession after his death Govinda III (794—814) was confronted subsequent to his accession to the throne with the hostility of his elder brother Stambha in league with a number of neighbouring kings. With the aid of his feudatories he defeated him and treated him generously by reappointing him to the Western Ganga Viceroyalty. In the meantime, Sivamara II though released from captivity by Govinda III had asserted his independence and espoused the cause of Stambha. Hence Govinda proceeded against him and repeated the work of his father in the annexation of the Ganga Kingdom, his brother again becoming the Ganga Viceroy. Next he invaded the Pallava dominions and defeated Dantavarman about 803. This victory was followed by a successful attack on Vijayaditya II Eastern Chalukya. Following the example of his father he invaded Northern India and triumphed over Nagabhata II Gurjara and Dharmapala of Bengal. Returning from the North, he renewed his campaigns against the southern powers Ganga and Pallava about 810 with such success that the king of Ceylon is said to have sent his own statue as a token of submission to Govinda who was then at Kanchi. His qualities of generalship and statesmanship secured to him a unique position in India North and South of the Vindhya. He raised the name and fame of his dynasty to a level not attained before or after him. He consolidated his power at home by a policy of conciliation towards his feudatories and exhibited strength and wisdom in his dealings with Stambha while obtaining the hearty co-operation of his younger

brother Indra Viceroy of Gujarat. He may be regarded as the most distinguished among the Rashtrakutas, a dynasty remarkable for the ability and enterprise of its members.

**Amoghavarsha I** The accession of Amoghavarsha I (814—880) to the throne at the age of six provided the occasion for the revolt of feudatories and the assertion of Western Ganga independence, followed by the dethronement of the boy king. From this anarchy the Rashtrakuta Empire was saved between 816 and 821, and Amoghavarsha regained his regal position. About 860 he defeated Vijayaditya III of Vengi, and came to an understanding with the Gujarat branch of the Rashtrakutas with whom he had difficulties from 835 though they had rendered loyal service in connection with his rein statement as king. Owing to internal difficulties, he could not follow a forward policy either in Northern India or in the South. He acquiesced in the independence of the Western Gangas and concluded an alliance with them, strengthening it by the marriage of his daughter with Butuga I, the Ganga prince. In Northern India, the progress of Mihira Bhoja did not stimulate Amoghavarsha into activity. In short, from the military point of view, his gains were not striking, and he was not a lover of war. He was constitutionally a religious man and lover of peace. He admired and patronised Jainism, and some regard him as a Jain. He was a truly pious man who tested the validity of precepts by translating them into practice. His teacher-in-chief, Jinaseva was a Jain. He did not abjure Hindu doctrines and beliefs—he worshipped Mahalakshmi—in spite of his love for Jainism. He is supposed to be the author of *Kavirajamarga*, the first known work on Kannada poetics, (probably composed by his court poet, Sri vijaya), if he was not its author, he was its patron. A Sanskrit work, the *Prasannaratnamala*, is attributed to him perhaps rightly as there is a reference in it to its author's abdication. It seems to have been composed between 875 and 879. Whether he abdicated or not, he delegated much of his power to the crown prince Krishna. He was the founder of Manyakheta to which he shifted his capital. It is thought that he is referred to as 'the long lived Balhara (a corruption of Vallabha)' by Sulaiman who describes him (851) as a



great emperor of the world along with the rulers of Constantinople, Baghdad and China.\*

**Krishna II** Though Krishna II (880—912) came into conflict with Mihua Bhoja nothing substantial was achieved on either side. But the serious event of his reign was the establishment of Eastern Chalukya independence by Vijaya-ditya III and Bhima I. The Rashtrakutas of Gujarat however, were brought under imperial control the separate line being abolished. Krishna's achievements were poor, and like Amoghavarsha I he loved and protected Jainism and came under the influence of Gunabhadra, a great Jain writer. He lost Vengi and made no attempt to recover the Western Ganga Kingdom that had been lost by his father. But his successor Indra III (912—917) revived the glories of the reign of Govinda III by his adventures in Northern India.

**Art** We have mentioned the Kailasa temple of Krishna I. Some of its sculptures are representations of the Descent of the Ganges and of Ravana's attempt to pull down Mount Kailasa. Here the quivering of the mountain has been felt and Parvati turns to Siva and grasps his arm in fear while her maid takes to flight but the Great God is unmoved and holds all fast by pressing down his foot. At Elephanta (island near Bombay) there are sculptures depicting the marriage of Siva and Parvati, Siva as Yogi and above all the colossal Trimurti though some would assign these to the period 500 to 600. On the whole the Rashtrakutas do not seem to be great patrons of art.

#### SECTION XIV THE EASTERN CHALUKYAS OF VENGI\*

The Eastern Chalukyas or the Chalukyas of Vengi were a branch of the Chalukyas of Badami. Pulakesin II's conquest of the Andhra country from the Vishnukundins was followed by the constitution of a Viceroyalty entrusted to his younger brother Vishnuvardhana surnamed Kubja or hunch backed, who had been Governor of Maharashtra till 615 in which year he was transferred to the new province which seems to have extended from Nellore to Vizagapatnam.

\* Elliot and Dowson op cit I pp 34

† Gopalaraswamy op cit p 109

His loyalty to Pulakesin is proved by an inscription of 630. The Eastern Chalukya inscriptions indicate 615 and 633 as the initial and final regnal years of Vishnuvardhana I. He assumed the title of *Vishamasiddhi*, or conqueror of difficulties, which appears on a silver coin of his with the figure of a lion and of a trident and lamps on either side—the earliest Chalukya coin definitely known. The catastrophic close of Pulakesin II's reign appears to have made the Eastern Chalukyas independent. For more than a century after their separation, their history is obscure. Now and then there were succession disputes and supersession of princes. The establishment of the Rashtrakuta dynasty on the ruins of the Western Chalukya power had far reaching effects on the position of the Chalukyas of Vengi. Vishnuvardhana IV (764—799) became subordinate to Krishna I Rashtrakuta, but, after the latter's death, supported Govinda II against Dhruva whose triumph led to Vishnuvardhana's co-operation in Dhruva's campaign against the Western Gangas. He was loyal to Govinda III, but his son and successor, Vijayaditya II (799—843) rebelled against Rashtrakuta authority, and was consequently expelled from the throne by Govinda III. But, after the latter's death in 814, he regained his throne, invaded the Rashtrakuta dominions, and defeated Amoghavarsha I. He assumed imperial titles like *Maharajadhiraja* and *Paramesvara* and became famous as a builder of temples. Vijayaditya III (844—888) was defeated by Amoghavarsha about 860, but subsequently his inscriptions credit him with a number of victories against the Pallavas, the Pandyas, the Western and Eastern Gangas, the Rashtrakutas, etc.\* Bhima I (888—918) finally secured the independence of his dynasty and freed it from Rashtrakuta control during the reign of Krishna II. Panduranga was a great general who served both Vijayaditya III and Bhima I.

#### SECTION XV THE WESTERN GANGAS OF TALAKAD (Contd.)

Passing over Mushkara, Bhuvikrama and Sivamara I who reigned in the seventh century—their part in the Chalukya-Pallava struggle is not clear,—we come to Sripurusha (726—789), who claims a glorious victory over the Pallavas of

\* D. C. Ganguly, *The Eastern Chalukyas* (1937) pp. 57-64

Kanchi. He transferred his capital to Manne near Bangalore and his rule was so beneficent that his kingdom was called *Srirajya*. He wrote on elephants while the Rashtrakutas under Krishna I invaded Gangavadi. Sivamara II (788—812) suffered much in his conflict with Dhruva and Govinda III. His mastery of several subjects is recorded—logic, philosophy, drama, grammar, etc. He knew the management of elephants and horses and composed the *Gajasataka* in Kannada. An attempt was made to re-establish Ganga independence soon after the accession of Amoghavarsha I and we have seen how that Rashtrakuta followed a conciliatory policy. Rajamalla I (817—853) rebelled against the Rashtrakutas. Nitimarga I (853—870) continued with success the struggle for Ganga independence. Rajamalla II (870—907) and Butuga I were on friendly terms with Amoghavarsha I who made the latter his son-in-law. They came into conflict with Chalukyas of Vengi and allied themselves with the Pallavas against the Pandyas. Krishna II Rashtrakuta did not tamper with the independence of the Western Gangas. Prithivipati I (853—880) belonged to a subsidiary branch of the Gangas, ruling over Kolar in consequence of the partition of the kingdom. He helped Aparajita Pallava at the battle of Sripurambiyam (Tanjore District). Prithivipati II (880—925) was a feudatory of Parantaka I Chola.

#### SECTION XVI THE PALLAVAS OF KANCHI (Contd.)

**Mahendravarman I** The Pallava dynasty emerged from the previous period of chronological and even genealogical uncertainty and attained in the seventh century to unquestioned pre-eminence in political and cultural history. Mahendravarman I (c 600—c 630) lost a part of his dominions to Pulakesin II Chalukya but his Trichinopoly cave inscription proves the southern extension of his kingdom. Though he was worsted in his contest with the Western Chalukyas his fame was established in other spheres of activity. Under the influence of Saint Appar he gave up Jainism and adopted Saivism. His Trichinopoly record refers to his adherence to the *linga* cult and to his construction of a cave temple in which his own stone statue was erected. His rock-cut temples to Siva and Vishnu exist in other places—Vallam

(near Chingleput), Mahendravadi (near Arkonam), and Dalavanur (near Tindivanam), and his tank at Mahendravadi is famous. An inscription at Mandagapattu (South Arcot District) says that "Vichitrachitta (Mahendravarman) caused to be constructed a temple to Brahma, Siva and Vishnu without the use of bricks, timber, metal and mortar. It is said that as a Jain he persecuted the followers of other religions than Jainism, and that as an ardent Saiva, he destroyed a Jain monastery at Pataliputra (South Arcot District). He assumed a number of titles like *Gunabhara*, *Satyasandha*, *Parama mahesvara*, *Mahendrakrama*, *Chetthalar* (builder of temples) and *Mattavilasa*. The last title is substantiated by his authorship of the Sanskrit farce, *Mattavilasa-Prahasana*, which caricatures Buddhist monks and mentions Saiva sects like the Kapalikas and Pasupatas. The Jain cave paintings at Sittannavasal (Pudukkottai State) include illustrations of dancing and it is supposed that Mahendravarman patronised dancing. His encouragement of painting is indicated by his surname, *Chitrakarappuli*. The music inscription at Kudimiyamalai (Pudukkottai State) is ascribed in his imitative, and he is regarded as an expert in music. The many sided activity of Mahendravarman is perhaps revealed in his title of *Vichitrachitta*. Though his Trichinopoly statue is not extant, there is a sculptured portrait of the king along with his two queens at Mahabalipuram on the coast near Chingleput.

**Narasimhavarman I.** We have alluded to the victory of Narasimhavarman (630—655) at Manimangalam and to the subsequent destructive invasion of the Western Chalukya kingdom by his general Sivutonda Nayanar, resulting in the tragic end of Pulakesin II in 642 hence Narasimha's surname *Valapikonda* and *Mahamalla*. Another triumph redounding to his credit is the restoration of the Sinhalese prince Manavarma, to his ancestral throne and in this connection two naval expeditions started from Mahabalipuram, the second one achieving its object. Hiuen Tsiang visited Kanchi about 640 and found it a big city, about six miles in circumference containing about 100 Buddhist monasteries inhabited by more than 10 000 monks, though Buddhism was in a moribund condition in the Pandya country. Further, there were about 80 non-Buddhist temples and Digambara Jainism was popular. But

the revival of Saivism had already begun to eclipse Buddhism. Narasimhavarman was the founder of the Mahabalipuram or Mamallapuram and some of the famous monuments of the place called the Seven Pagodas may be assigned to him particularly the Dharmaraja Ratha.

**His Successors** The next ruler, Mahendravarman II (c 655—c 660), was succeeded by Paramesvaravarman I (c 660—c 680). He submitted to Vikramaditya I Chalukya who captured Kanchi and marched as far as Trichinopoly in 674 but the former is said to have defeated his enemy and compelled him to take to his heels. It seems that he built the monolithic Ganesa temple at Mahabalipuram and a structural temple of Siva at Kuram (near Kanchi). He was an ardent worshipper of Siva to whom a number of shrines were dedicated. Narasimhavarman II (c 680—c 700), surnamed *Rajasimha*, enjoyed a peaceful reign characterised by much attention to art. He built the Kailasanatha temple at Kanchi, the Shore temple at Mahabalipuram etc. His titles like *Sanlara bhakta*, *Vadyavidyadhara* and *Agamapriya* appear to give the clue to his varied interests. Some scholars would place Dandin, the great Sanskrit prose writer and rhetorician at the court of Rajasimha and regard the extant plays attributed to Bhasa as mere stage adaptations got ready at Kanchi during this reign as Rajasimha is mentioned in their colophons.

**Nandivarman Pallavamalla** After Paramesvaravarman II (c 700—c 710) came Nandivarman II Pallavamalla (c 710—c 775), who is regarded as a usurper by some and as an 'elected' ruler by others. There was a dynastic change and Nandivarman belonged to the line of Bhimavarman, the brother of Simhavishnu. About 740 he was overpowered by Vikramaditya II Chalukya, who held Kanchi for some time. His conflict with Rajasimha I Pandya was prolonged and Nandipura (Nathankovil, near Kumbhakonam), where he was staying, was besieged, but Udayachandra, his general came to his rescue. The achievements of Udayachandra are recorded in the king's Udayendiram plates which credit the general with the conquest of a part of the Eastern Chalukya territory. A number of battles were fought in the region around Tanjore in the course of the Pallava-Pandya contest.

A Rashtrakuta invasion of Kanchi is mentioned, and probably it resulted in the conclusion of an alliance between Dantidurga and Nandivarman perhaps strengthened by the latter's marriage with Reva, the daughter of that Rashtrakuta. Nandivarman is also said to have come into collision with the Western Gangas under Sripurusha. He was a Vaishnava, and during his reign lived the Vaishnava scholar and saint, Tirumangai Alvar, whose writings form a substantial portion of the *Nalayiraprabandham*. He built the Muktesvara temple at Kanchi, and perhaps the *Vaikanthaperumal* temple in the same place.

**Dantivarman and his Successors** Dantivarman (c 775—c 826) was the son of Nandivarman II by the Rashtrakuta princess whose father's name had been given to her son. In spite of this relationship, Dhruva and Govinda III led expeditions to Kanchi. An inscription of Dantivarman in the Parthasarathi temple, Triplicane (Madras), shows its antiquity. It is supposed that Varaguna Pandya I occupied the Kaveri region for some time. Nandivarman III (c 826—c 849) won a great victory over Srimara Pandya at Tellaru (near Wandiwash)—hence his surname *Tellarrerinda* Nandivarman—and is said to have marched as far south as the Vaigai. The *Nandikkalambakam* is a contemporary Tamil account of his victories, and mentions his chief cities—Kanchi, Malaiyapuram and Mayilai (Mylapore Madras). He married a Rashtrakuta princess worshipped Siva, and patronised Tamil Literature, Perundevanar the author of the *Bharata Venba*, appears to have been his contemporary. His son and successor, Nripatungavarman (c 849—c 875) defeated Srimara Pandya at Arichut (the Arisil, a tributary of the Kaveri). His Bahur (Vahur, near Pondicherry) plates record the grant of three villages by his minister for the support of an institution for the study of the *Vedas* and the *Sastras*. Aparajita (c 875—c 893) the last Pallava triumphed over Varaguna II Pandya about 880 at Sripurambiyam (Tirupurambiyam near Kumbhakonam) with the help of Prithivipati I Western Ganga, but towards the close of the ninth century, Aditya I Chola inflicted a decisive defeat on him, and the main Pallava dynasty came to an end.

**Administration** That as early as the fourth century a well organised administration existed in the Pallava Kingdom is clear from the Hirabadagalli grant of Sivashandavarman which records the renewal of a gift of tax free land to a number of Brahmans in the *Satahanurattitha* (*rashtra* or province of Satavahana corresponding to the region about Bellary). The exemptions relate to the following items the taking of sweet and sour milk troubles about salt and sugar forced labour the taking of oxen in succession the taking of grass and wood the taking of vegetables and flowers and other immunities of eighteen kinds. This is a fragmentary picture of the taxes usually imposed except on tax free lands. The manufacture of salt and sugar seems to be a government monopoly. Further the inscription registers a royal order to provincial governors princes generals district officers custom house officers and other government servants. The system of administration under the early Pallavas is like the Maurya system which was continued with modifications during the period from the second century B C to the third century A D which to some extent anticipated the Gupta system as we have seen. The inscriptions of the great Pallavas supply additional details regarding the tax system and throw some light on the village assemblies and their committees which in some measure functioned as in the subsequent Chola period. The *sabha* (assembly) was characteristic of villages occupied by Brahmans as is apparent from the qualifications prescribed for membership of the committees. It managed temples and supervised tanks and other public works constructed with the resources of the central government which built temples dug tanks and canals made roads etc.

**Religion and Literature** We have seen that the seventh century was the period of triumph of Brahmanism with its Siva and Vishnu cults and of decadence of Buddhism and Jainism in the Pallava Empire. The greatness of Kanchi as a seat of Sanskrit learning is clear from the inscriptions which were composed by literary men. A Tamil part is found in the charters only of the later period. Mayurasarman the founder of the Kadamba dynasty went to Kanchi to complete his studies. Dingnaga's name is associated with Kanchi, and

Dharmapala is said to have been invited to his court by Sambhaviśnu. In the seventh century, Mihendravarman I wrote a Sanskrit farce. Hsien Tsang says that Dharmapala, who presided over the Nalanda University before Śīlabhadra, belonged to Kanchi. Some would connect Dandin with the Pallava court. We have referred to the theory of stage-abridgement regarding Bhāsa's plays. The *Teraram* trio (Appar, Sambandar and Sundarar) and Maṇikkavāṣakar, according to some scholars (before Appar in the opinion of others), lived during the period of the great Pallavas. Some of the Alvars like Tirumangu Alvar belong to the same age. Thus the *Teraram* and the *Nalayaṇaprabandham* represent the religious literature of the Pallava epoch which contributed to the ascendancy of Brahmanism and the decreasing popularity of the heterodox religions. The Pallava coins contain the dynastic crest—the maned lion.

**Art Rathas** The five *rathas* named after Dharmaraja (Yudhisṭhira), Bhīma, Arjuna, Sahadeva and Draupadī are apparently Śiva monolithic shrines. The sculptures called "Arjuna's penance" are regarded by some scholars as "the Descent of the Ganges". Here a great rock wall with a median fissure has been covered on both sides with sculptured figures of deities, human beings, Nagas and animals of all kinds, approaching or facing towards the fissure and for the most part with hands joined in adoration. Immediately to the left of the fissure is a small sculptured shrine containing the standing figure of a four armed deity, probably Śiva. Before the temple is an emaciated yogi (Bhagavatha) practising *tapas*. The fissure is occupied by the Nagas, above on either side are flying figures of gods, and below are the wild creatures of the forests, amongst which the monumental elephants may be specially mentioned. (There is also) the figure of the ascetic cat standing erect as a *tapasvi* in *urdhva* *bahū* (hands uplifted) while trustful mice play at his feet. A detached group representing a monkey family is a masterpiece of animal sculpture.



Stone Architecture in the Tamil land begins with the Palavas. From the cave temples of Trichinopoly to the *rathas* of Mahabalipuram and subsequently to structural temples like the Shore temple at Mahabalipuram—this is the line of evolution of Pallava art. Four architectural styles are distinguished, named after (1) Mahendravarman I, (2) Mahamalla (3) Rajasimha and Nandivarman II and (4) Aparajita. There is evidence of transfer of skill from wood work to stone work, and the indigenous origin of Pallava art is clear from the development of the primitive hut into the temple. Artistic evolution has been on indigenous lines. Prof. Jouveau Dubreuil divides the history of Dravidian art into five epochs: 'The Pallava period (600–850), is that of sculptured rocks (cave temples appearing only in this period) the Early Chola period (850–1100), that of grand *vimanas* (the sanctuary of the temple), the later Chola period (1100–1350) that of the most beautiful *gopurams* (gateways), the Vijayanagar period (1350–1600) that of *mantapams*, and the modern period (after 1600), that of corridors. He says that the forms of architecture changed slowly and that the development is primarily one of ornamentation, so much so that the history of Dravidian Architecture reduces itself to the history of ornamentation. There is not much structural development the methods of construction are very elementary, though the sculptural part of the work is exceedingly interesting in heaping stone upon stone the art of the engineer is almost nothing.

## SECTION XVII THE PANDYAS OF MADURA

**Dynastic History** Our knowledge of the Pandyas from the seventh to the ninth century is mainly derived from a few copper plate grants, the chief of which is the Velvikudi grant of Nedunjadayan. Though the numerous data of these records give unmistakable indications of the recovery of the Pandyas from the Kalabhra interregnum and of the expansion of their power, the identification of the kings mentioned in them and their chronology are debated by scholars. From one or two dated records of the eighth and ninth centuries we may work backwards on the basis of an average of twenty five years for each reign and place the beginning of Pandya

revival at the commencement of the seventh century. The first two kings, Kadungon and Maravarman Avanisulaman, may be assigned to the first half of that century. The third ruler Sendan (c 645—c 670) is credited with warlike qualities and sense of justice, and his title *Vanatan* may signify his conquest of the Cheras. He was succeeded by Arikesari Parankusa Maravarman (c 670—c 710), perhaps identical with the Kun Pandya of tradition, and during his reign the Pandya—Pallava clash started. He won a great victory at Nelveli, identified by some scholars with Tinnevely. He triumphed over the Cheras as well. The Kun Pandya is said to have been converted from Jainism to Saivism by Saint Sambandar. He is regarded as a violent persecutor of the Jains after his conversion, and according to the story, 8000 of them were impaled on stakes. He is said to have married a Chola princess at whose instance, Sambandar was invited to Madura. He was followed by Kochchadayan Ranadhira (c 710—740) who defeated an Ay chief at Marudur, near Ambasamudram and won a victory over 'Maharathas' at Mangalore. His successor Maravarman Rajasimha I (c 740—c 765) conquered the Kaveri region and besieged Nandivarman Pallava malla at Nandipura until the arrival of the Pallava general Udayachandra to the support of his sovereign. He is said to have married a Western Ganga princess and defeated the Chalukyas probably Kirtivarman II. He performed many *mahadanas* or 'great gifts'. After him came Jatila Parantaka Nedunjadayan (Varaguna I), the donor of the Velvikkudi plates belonging to his third regnal year, who may be assigned to c 765—c 815. He seems to have been the greatest imperialist of his dynasty who successfully encountered the opposition of the Pallavas and the Cheras and his conquests were so extensive as to include the Tanjore, Trichinopoly, Salem and Coimbatore Districts together with Southern Travancore. He was an enthusiastic builder of Siva and Vishnu temples. Some scholars associate his name with that of Manikkavasakar. The next Pandya, Srimara Srivallabha (c 815—c 862), invaded Ceylon and maintained his position successfully against a counter invasion of his own dominions. His greatest triumph was achieved at Kudamukku (Kumbhakonam) and he assumed imperial titles like

*Parachakrakolahala* He was however, subsequently defeated at Tellaru by Nandivarman III Pallava and at Anchit by Nripatungavarman He was followed by Varaguna II (c 862—c 880) who was defeated about 880 by Aparajita Pallava at Sripurambiyam Parantaka Viranarayana Pandya (c 880—c 900) married a Chera princess and strove hard to maintain his position His successor Rajasimha II (c 900—c 920) was overthrown by Parantaka I Chola who captured Madura about 920, and the former fled to Ceylon and subsequently to the Chera country \*

\* **Administration and Religion** Various officers like the *Uttaramantri* (Prime Minister) are mentioned in inscriptions, and there was no clean separation of civil and military powers An inscription from Manur (Tinnevely District) of about 800 gives a picture of village administration by assemblies and committees to some extent similar to the Chola system of the tenth century One interesting point mentioned in that record is the penalisation of the obstructionist tactics of the members of the *sabha* The Pandya kings of the period patronised Sanskrit and Tamil, and their inscriptions possess literary merit The progress of Saivism and Vaishnavism characteristic of the age was detrimental to Buddhism and Jainism, particularly to the former The happy religious condition of the Sangam age was completely changed The great Tamil saints Saiva and Vaishnava substantially contributed to the spiritual enlightenment of their country and appealed directly to the ordinary people, but the

and defeats before their conquest by the imperial Cholas. The origin of the Jews and Christians of Malabar is a complicated problem. The West Coast Christian tradition is that St. Thomas came from Socotra to Cranganore in A.D. 52, founded seven churches in various places on the coast including Cranganore and Quilon, proceeded to the Coromandel Coast and was martyred near Mylapore. Though it is difficult to prove or disprove this tradition, the existence of Christianity in Malabar in the sixth century is proved by the reference to it made by Cosmas Indicopleustes. The tradition regarding Manikkavasakar's reconversion of two Christian families to Brahmanism is of practically no use as we are not sure of the age of that Tamil saint. The Jewish immigration into Malabar is assigned to the first century A.D. 10,000 Jews are said to have migrated from Jerusalem after its sack by the Romans in A.D. 71. But the first definite proof of the Jewish colony on the West coast comes from the Tamil charter of Bhasara Ravivarman issued from Cranganore to Joseph Rabban, giving him and his descendants certain lands and privileges and this document is assigned to the eighth or tenth century. According to tradition, the Arabs settled in Malabar in the ninth century and married Indian women and the Moplah population came into existence. The Kollam era of A.D. 824-5 is generally supposed to have originated in connection with the foundation of Quilon. There is only a single coin (silver with Nagari inscriptions) belonging to the Cheras and it is assigned to the eleventh or twelfth century A.D.

## SECTION XIX RELIGION

**Buddhism** We have seen that the Buddha's success during his lifetime was due to his unique personality and character coupled with the respect that he commanded in aristocratic and royal circles, thanks to his rank as a Sakya prince. Though he died without nominating his successor, going to the extent of saying that the *Dhamma* would be the guide of his followers, the Sangha organised by him stepped into his place and carried on his mission. Though dissensions developed among the monks, much solid work of internal organisation was done and the Canon was gradually formed and fixed. But there was no

Outlines of  
History

appreciable external growth and in this respect Jainism stole a march over Buddhism. The era of phenomenal expansion of Buddhism was ushered in by Asoka and after the fall of the Maurya Empire though it lost the patronage of the State in Kalinga under Kharavela and in the Gangetic Valley under Pushyamitra its position in other parts of India was strong. With Kanishka and owing to its evolution into Mahayanism Buddhism made rapid progress beyond India and its condition in South India was stable up to the seventh century. In Northern India the revived Brahmanism of the Gupta age was a great rival to Buddhism but the two religions progressed on parallel lines in many respects so much so that their similarities are striking—image worship, festival, prayers etc. The conquest of Buddhism by Brahmanism was slow but steady, and the method of conquest was not violent. The accounts of Fa hien and Hsuen Tsang bear evidence of the local decline of Buddhism but testify more eloquently to the increasing importance of Brahmanism. It was only in the eighth century in Northern India and in the seventh century in South India that marked Buddhist decline set in.

Before proceeding to the decline of Buddhism let us give some attention to the causes of the phenomenal growth of this religion. After the death of the Buddha his personality and character were transmuted into a tradition handed down from generation to generation and embodied in sacred literature. Whatever might be the historicity of the picture of the Buddha thus transmitted to later ages it was regarded as real by simple and pious folk and by enthusiastic monks. The Great Renunciation of the Master and the unnumbered virtues of his long life went straight to the heart of the people who came to know him. There is no parallel in Brahmanism to this feature of Buddhism. With the rise of Mahayanism the Buddha became divine and again it was his life and personality which conquered the hearts and consciences of men and women. At the same time the importance of the organised and well-disciplined Sangha with its members devoted to spiritual exercises and wedded to poverty and chastity cannot be overrated. Such a body so long as it remained a reservoir of spiritual energy

was the best instrument of religious conquest, and the financial support necessary for propaganda would be given by the public to such an organisation rather than to individuals working separately. Further the development of Mahayanism made Buddhism a popular religion, whereas Hinayanism with its monastic ideal and austere ways could make only a comparatively restricted appeal to ordinary people. Above all, without royal support, much could not be done by the Sangha with all its energy and enthusiasm. It was the espousal of the Buddhist cause by Asoka and Kanishka that transformed a local religion into a world faith. All that they did for its progress could never be done by many private individuals during a number of generations. It was royal support that acted largely as the stimulus to private benefactions. The importance of the adherence of Asoka to Buddhism is clear from the change he wrought in its status by his exertions to advance its fortunes. Similarly Kanishka's favours to that religion were responsible for its wide diffusion in Central Asia and China. A missionary religion in particular gains immensely, in strength and prestige from its patronage by the state.

Hsien Tsang's description of the condition of Buddhism in India shows that while in the North West it was predominant and in the far east (Assam) non-existent, in other parts of the country it was powerful along with Brahmanism. In a few localities it was in a languishing state, for example, in the Pandya country. During the eighth and ninth centuries Brahmanism eclipsed Buddhism except in Sindh, Nepal, Bihar and Bengal, excluding localities practising Jainism.

**Jainism, Brahmanism and Zoroastrianism** Jainism was strong in Kathiawar, Gujarat and Mysore. It was patronised by the Rashtrakutas and tolerated by the Chalukyas of Badami. Though some of the early Pandyas of the period professed it, it was losing ground from the reign of Kun Pandya. The attitude of the Pallavas after Mahendravarman I's conversion to Saivism was not favourable to Jainism. Still its position in the Tamil country was better than that of Buddhism. Brahmanism became predominant at the expense of Buddhism and, to some extent, of

**Immigration** Our period witnessed two gigantic figures within the Brahmanical fold—*Kumarila* and *Sanhara*. The *Parsis*—the term being the Persian form of the Arabic *Farsi*, meaning belonging to Fars a province of Persia—or the Iranian Pilgrim Fathers consequent on the overthrow of the Sassanian dynasty of Persia in 652 by the Arabs, left Hormuz and reached Diu about 716 and after a few years stay there migrated to Sanjan (about one hundred miles north of Bombay and about sixteen miles south of Diu) about 735 and settled down there. The exact date of the event is a disputed question and some scholars defend the date 936. The immigrants are said to have declared to the Hindu ruler prior to their landing in India: 'Do not be afraid of us for no harm will come through us to this country, we shall be the friends of India, we shall destroy your enemies.' Their advent to this country has been compared with the migration of the Huguenots to England and of the English Puritans to America. They remained at Sanjan till about 1492, when they fought and failed against Sultan Mahmud I of Gujarat and their settlement was sacked. After that disaster, they moved on to Gujarat. "In the impulse given by them to female education and to the consequent refinement of home life in their abandonment of retrograde social customs and practices, in the extent and catholicity of their public benefactions, and in their assimilation of all that was best in Western culture, the example set by the Parsis in the last one hundred years has been of the utmost value to India and to the sister communities. In this respect the Parsis have repaid manifold the debt of gratitude which their remote ancestors of the eighth century owed to the Hindu prince who gave them refuge." \*

## SECTION XX SOCIAL LIFE

**Castes** Though there were other castes than the four chief ones, the innumerable sub castes characteristic of later ages did not exist in this period. An Arab writer of about 900 mentions seven castes in the following order: the royal caste, Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Sudras, Vaisyas, Chandalas and

\* *Commissariat op cit* pp LII—LIV

the *Lakul* (probably wandering tribes described by that author as "fond of amusements and games of skill") But this description is over simplified and partially inaccurate. That writer testifies to the prevalence of *anuloma* marriages though the general rule restricted the choice of partners to one's own caste. There was no rigidity regarding caste occupations. The Brahmins were engaged in professions including agriculture appropriate to the other castes. The *Vaiśyas* had been mainly traders and the agriculturists chiefly *Sudras*, though they belonged to the higher castes as well. Foreign travellers notice that the people were not

generally addicted to drink, and the gradual ascendancy of the *ahimsa* doctrine was reflected in the growing tendency to give up animal food. In spite of the great influence of the *Mīmāṃsikas*

sacrifices to a large extent fell into disuse. Commensality or inter-dining among the higher castes was not restricted. Love of ornaments was characteristic even of princes who wore

costly ear rings and necklaces. The absence of the nose screw is significant there is no word for it in Sanskrit and it must have been borrowed from Muslims later. Mr C V Vaidya is strong

ly convinced that child marriages began in the eighth century, but we have seen them vogue among Brahmins as early as the Sutra period. Still it must be noted that the *Brahma Purana* says that a girl past the age of four may be married. There was a general long standing interdict on remarriage of widows and the old custom of *sati* was intact. In his *Kadambari* Bana condemns the custom as thoroughly

Religious "futile and foolish and equates it with suicide but during the seventh and the following centuries an impetus was given to it by the extravagant praise of its supporters. The hostility to remarriage of widows became uncompromising. We have a few examples of suicide at holy places and of faithful servants of kings following their masters on the funeral pyre. The Arab travellers generally describe the Hindus as honest just and true to their word

\* A S Altakar *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation* (1933) pp 362-64



## SECTION XXI CULTURE

We have dealt with art in connection with dynastic history. The other aspects of culture are reflected in literature, pure and technical. We shall deal with Sanskrit Literature century by century.

**Seventh Century.** We have considered the works of Harsha, of his proteges, Bana and Mayura, and of Mahendra Varman Pallava I and Bhatti. Bhartṛihari who died about 651, according to I tsing, is famous for his *Bhartṛihari Vakyapadiya* which deals with the philosophy of Sanskrit grammar and is "the last independent contribution to Indian grammatical science". He commented on the *Mahabhashya* of Patanjali. His three *Satakas* (Hundred Stanzas) on conduct, love and renunciation have made him a popular author. Doubts have been expressed regarding the identity of the grammarian and the poet. But there is no doubt that the author of the *Vakyapadiya* was a Buddhist who assumed monastic robes seven times, and it is not unlikely that he wrote the *Satakas* as well. He was the first Sanskrit poet known to Europe, his *Niti* and *Vairagya Satakas* were translated by the Dutch missionary, Abraham Roger, in 1651. Kumaradasa, the author of the epic, *Janakiharana*, was a follower of Kalidasa. A famous commentary on Panini's *Ashtadhyayi* is the *Kasikavritti* of Jayadeva and Vamana much praised by I tsing as a work which reduced the period of grammatical study from twelve to five years. **Prabhakara** was the founder of the school of Mimamsa named after him, and his interpretation of the *Sabara Bhashya* was not accepted by Kumarila Bhatta the more famous Mimamsaka and antagonist of Buddhism. Dharmakirti, the Buddhist author of the *Nyayabindu*, revived Dingnaga's logic. **Brahmagupta** composed his astronomical and mathematical works in 628 and 665 respectively, and he follows his predecessors generally and criticises them when necessary, sometimes unfairly, particularly Aryabhata. Like the latter, he was a greater mathematician than an astronomer, but his orthodoxy prevented his acceptance of Aryabhata's theory of the earth.

revolution of the earth on its axis The *Manasara* on architecture is assigned to 500 700

**Eighth Century.** We have considered Bhavabhūti Bhatta Narayana's *Venisaṃhara* is a drama dealing with the epic episode of the dragging of Draupadī by the hair and her vow of not tying it up before vengeance is wreaked on the perpetrator of the outrage, though undramatic, it is good from the point of view of characterisation and the sentiment of pathos. Magha, the author of the Mahākāvya *Sisupalavadhā*, overhauled by Indian critics and disparaged by Western scholars on account of his verbal tricks and artificiality, is a true poet possessing good ideas and clothing them in beautiful language He was influenced by Bhāravi and Bhaṭṭi, two other Mahākāvya He was known as "bell Magha" for his ingenious comparison of a mountain, with the setting sun and the rising moon on either side to an elephant with two bells hanging on either side from his back Amaru, the lyric poet, assigned by Dr A. B Keith to 600 750 deals with refined sensual love in his *Sataṭa* which depicts lovers in various moods We have seen Damodara Gupta, Udbhata and Vāmana at the court of Jayapīḍa Karkota Kumārila Bhaṭṭa differed from Prabhākara in the interpretation of Śābara's *Bhāṣya* on Jaimini's *Mīmāṃsā Sūtras* and founded the Bhaṭṭa school of Mīmāṃsā He was a South Indian though some say that he belonged to Assam, while Mr C V Vaidya places him in the Mādhyadesa He was a vehement opponent of Buddhism who condemned it outright for its denial of the authority of the *Vedas* Much more than Śaṅkara in the next century, he was responsible for the Brahmanical propaganda against Buddhism His militant campaign has given rise to the story that his influence was exerted in favour of the persecution of Buddhism in some places He was not only a dialectician but a master of several languages It is said that he learnt Buddhism from Buddhist teachers by pretending to be a Buddhist and that when he became old, he burnt himself to death in order to atone for his sin of *gurudroha* (betrayal of his teachers) In short by defeating the Buddhist scholars in

disputation, he established the doctrine of the infallibility of the *Vedas* and the necessity and value of conformity to their *vidhis* or injunctions. His career marks a further stage in the decline of Buddhism. Kamandaka's *Nitisara* is largely based on the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya, but somewhat didactic in character. The *Ashtangahrudaya Samhita* of the younger Vagbhata is a medical work similar to that of Vriddha Vagbhata. The *Rusunischaya* of Madhvakarna dealing with pathology, largely influenced later writers on the subject.

**Ninth Century** The dramatist Murari's *Anargha raghava* is not regarded as a great performance, though his mastery of Sanskrit grammar and vocabulary is admirable. We saw Anandavardhana, Sivayamin, Ratnakara and Abhinanda at the court of Avantivarman Utpala and Bhallata at that of Sankaravarman, the successor of Avantivarman. Though the materials available for Sankara's life are largely undependable, its main outlines are sufficiently clear though not strictly historical. He was a Nambutiri Brahman, born at Kaladi (North Travancore), most probably towards the close of the eighth century. But Mr K. G. Sankar, the latest writer on the subject, assigns him to A. D. 452-84 on the strength of his references to rulers like Purnavarman who is identified with his Javanese namesake\*. Sankara left his home came into contact with his teacher Govinda the disciple of Gaudapada, propounded his monistic doctrine at Benares and wrote commentaries on the *Brahma Sutras* of Badarayana, the *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavad Gita*. His extensive travels took him to Ujjain, Kashmir, Nepal and Assam, and he established his own *mathas* at Badrinath (U. P.), Dvaraka (Kathiawar), Puri (Orissa) and Sringeri (Mysore). It is extremely improbable that he died at the age of thirty-two as is alleged by some traditions; seeing that he wrote much and was active in other ways, perhaps he became a *sannyasin* at that age and was thus dead in *\*p* sense to this world. Orthodoxy goes to the extent of believing

\* 1 Volume of *Eastern and Indian Studies* pp. 202-03

that he completed his *magnum opus*, the *Sutra Bhashya*, when he was only twelve years old. Though he took much from Buddhism like the doctrine of Maya and from its organisation so much so that he has been called a *Prachekhanna Dauddha* or crypto Buddhist, he was fundamentally opposed to the Buddhist nihilism of his day, and his edifice was built on the rock of the *Upanishads*. He unjustly condemned the Buddha as an ignoramus or a malicious malefactor of humanity, but paid the best tribute to his religion by borrowing from its bright side. Though he commented on the *Budaiyana Sūtras* he was less true to them than to the oldest *Upanishads*. He was to some extent indebted to his predecessors in the Advaitic line but his philosophy is substantially original. He applied the distinction between phenomenal and real to knowledge and distinguished between lower and higher knowledge. On the whole, he established the sovereignty of the intellect and liberated a fertilising stream of spiritual energy, annihilating nihilism, scepticism and materialism. His system may not be adequate from the religious point of view, but philosophically it is unshakable and perfect and Western critics give him the place of honour among Indian philosophers. Though he was not a militant propagandist like Kumarila Bhatta, his activity was highly detrimental to Buddhism and of epochal importance to Brahminism. It is profitless to visualise his unique place in the history of human thought if he had emancipated his vigorous intellect from the shackles of the doctrine of Upanishadic infallibility and progressed in the erection of his Palace of Philosophy, under the exclusive guidance of Sovereign Reason and Logic.

Vachaspati-  
misra      Vachaspatimisra a great commentator on many sastric texts—Mimamsa, Advaita (the *Bhamati*), Sankhya, Yoga and Nyaya—is truly remarkable for his dispassionate judgment—a precursor of the author of the *Sarvadarśanasamgraha* in judicial impartiality.

## CHAPTER VIII

### INDIA FROM 900 TO 1200

#### SECTION I THE BRAHMANA SHAHIS OF OHIND AND BHATINDA (Contd)

Samanta was succeeded by Kamaluka (900—940) and the latter by Bhima (940—965), whose daughter's daughter, Didda, was the queen of Kshemagupta of Kashmir (950—958) and hence the friendly relations between the two powers.

**Jayapala** The next ruler Jayapala (965—1001) came into conflict with the Muslim rulers of Ghazni which had been seized in 933 by Alptigin a Turkish slave. His kingdom extended from Jalalabad to Sirhind and from Kashmir to Multan. He changed his capital from Und to Bhatinda (Patiala State). In 977 Sabuktigin, the slave and son in law of Alptigin, became king of Ghazni, and his aggressions ultimately resulted in the defeat of Jayapala, who lost his dominions to the west of the Indus including Peshawar. His son Ismail who succeeded him in 997 was deposed by his brother, Mahmud of Ghazni, in 998 and the latter defeated and captured Jayapala at Peshawar in 1001 after a tough fight. Consequently the Shahi after his release committed suicide.

**Anandapala** His son and successor Anandapala (1001—1013) refused permission to Mahmud to march through his own territory to Multan and in consequence was overpowered and pursued by the Sultan in 1005, while his second son, Sukhapala, was captured and, after his acceptance of Islam, made Mahmud's representative in India when he hurried back to Ghazni to defend his dominions against Turkish invaders. Now Anandapala generously offered his services to his conqueror instead of exploiting that opportunity. But Sukhapala abjured Islam and revolted against his master. Soon Mahmud returned to India in 1007, seized the rebel, and imprisoned him for life. Anandapala's inactivity in favour of the Sultan was extremely ill advised. The latter found a pretext to invade the former's kingdom in 1008 and reduce him to vassalage. The Shahi

of the Brahmana Shahis was Trilochanapala (1013—1021), the first son of Anandapala, who succumbed to the unprovoked attack of Mahmud in 1013 in spite of the help received from Kashmir and his own courageous conduct. Though he made subsequent efforts to regain his position, he failed, and his dynasty came to an end in 1021. Though the Shahis lost their independence and power, they were much influential at the Kashmir court and their name commanded much respect. Alberuni refers to "the energetic founder of the Hindu Shahi dynasty" and observes "In all their grandeur, they (the Shahis) never slackened in the ardent desire of doing that which is good and right, they were men of noble sentiment and noble bearing", thus confirming the eulogy pronounced on them by Kalhana. The Turki and Brahmana Shahis remained for long the watch dogs of the North Western frontier of India. If their services to this country had been better appreciated by their Indian contemporaries and if they had been better supported by the latter, their achievements would have been more substantial. In spite of the evidences of their own coins and of Alberuni and Kalhana their genealogy and chronology are not sufficiently clear.

## SECTION II THE GURJARA PRatihARAS OF KANAUJ (Contd.)

Mahipala I (914—943) maintained his imperial position intact till 916 when his decisive overthrow by India III Rashtrakuta marked the beginning of the disruption of the Gurjara Pratihara Empire. Though that conqueror's death in the following year prevented the Rashtrakutas from exploiting their great victory and though Mahipala recovered a large part of his empire with the aid of his feudatories like the Chandellas, the imperial power became more nominal than real. After Mahipala I came Mahendrapala II, Devapala, Vinayakapala, Mahipala II, Vatsaraja II, and Vijayapala, whose chronology is uncertain. Devapala was deprived of his most cherished possession, an image of Vishnu, by Yasovarman Chandella. During the latter half of the tenth century, the Paramaras and the Chandellas were the most powerful of the Pratihara feudatories who had become

independent, the others being the Solankis of Anhilvad and the Kalachuris of Tripuri. When Rajyapala Gurjara ascended the throne of Kanauj between 960 and 1018, his kingdom was practically confined to the land between the Ganges and Jumna. Dr Ray, relying on contemporary Muslim chronicles, rejects the story of Ferishta the Muslim historian of the seventeenth century, that on two occasions (in 991 and 1003) the Shahis were helped in their contest with the kings of Ghazni by a confederacy of Indian states including Kanauj, "there is no evidence outside Ferishta that this common danger galvanised the Indian states of Northern India into common action." When Mahmud of Ghazni invaded the kingdom of Kanauj in 1018—9, Rajyapala submitted to him without a struggle, still the imperial city was sacked by the conqueror. Soon after his departure, the Pratihar king lost his life in consequence of the invasion of Kanauj by the incensed Chandella prince Vidyadhara who wanted to punish the cowardice of its ruler exhibited in the late happenings. Thus the great Gurjara Pratihara Empire came to an inglorious end. Inscriptions mentioning Trilochanapala and Yasahpal show that the Pratiharas had lost Kanauj, which was occupied by Chandradeva Gahadvala about 1090. The Pratiharas were followers of Saiva and Vaishnava cults, with special devotion to Bhagavati.

### SECTION III MAHMUD OF GHAZNI

**Career of Mahmud** Mahmud, a Turk by nationality and the eldest son of Sabuktigin, was born in 971. His early literary training was supplemented by his association with the administration and warfare of his father, who however appointed his younger son, Ismail, to succeed him, and died in 997. Mahmud ousted his brother and seized the throne of Ghazni in the following year. Thus coming into possession of a principality consisting of Afghanistan and Khorasan or eastern Persia, he extended it in 999 by the conquest of Sistan, and his position was recognised by the Khalif who bestowed upon him the title of Yamin ud Daulah. Hence he and his successors have been called the

**Invasions of India** In accordance with his vow to wage war with the infidels of India every year, he is said to have conducted seventeen expeditions (1) About 1000 he raided the Indian frontier and captured a few places (2) Next year witnessed his overthrow of Jayapala Shahi and plunder of India In 1002 he was engaged in putting down rebels in Seistan (3) In 1004 he plundered Uch and on his return home was harassed by the Muslim ruler of Multan against whom a punitive expedition was undertaken in 1005 (4) On his refusal to cooperate with the invader, Anandapala Shahi, was defeated and made to flee, and subsequently Mahmud secured the submission of Multan He hastened back to Ghazni to defend his kingdom against a Turkish invasion which he repelled, and on this occasion Indians formed a division of his army. (5) In 1007 he came to India again and chastised the rebel Sukhapala whose story has already been told (6) Anandapala was finally reduced to the position of a feudatory in 1008 after a severe contest which unexpectedly turned in Mahmud's favour After plundering Kangra the Sultan returned home and captured Ghori in 1009 (7) In the following year his objective was Delhi, but he was satisfied with a victory near Karnal and immense booty. (8) In 1011 he strengthened his position at Multan (9) In the campaign of 1013, he overthrew Trilochanapala Shahi and sent to his capital many innocent Indians of status who became slaves of ordinary shopkeepers (10) In 1014 he plundered Thanesar, destroyed its idols other than the chief one, which was despatched to Ghazni where it was placed in such a way that the believers might tread upon it (11) His invasion of Kashmir in the following year was a failure, and he returned home a sadder man 1016 and 1017 required his presence in Khorasan (12) During 1018-9 he enriched himself by the spoliation of Mathura (Muttra) and at Kanauj secured the submission of Rajyapala Pratihara This was the most remarkable of the Indian expeditions led by Mahmud so far, the booty carried away was large and Indian slaves became conspicuous in his empire, with the spoils of war, the Sultan built a great mosque and a college at Ghazni (13) In 1021 Vidyadhara Chandella who had killed Rajyapala Pratihara for his cowardice became himself a



at the sight of the Muslim army and took to his heels, according to one chronicle (14) Mahmud came to India again in the same year, and after his second failure against Kashmir, he annexed the Shahi territory of the Panjab to his empire (15) In 1022 he failed to capture Gwalior and Kalinjar (16) Three

**The Som-  
nath Expe-  
dition**

years later he achieved his greatest triumph in India—the expedition to Somnath (Patan on the coast of Kathiawar above Diu)

He is said to have been provoked into undertaking it by the boast of the Brahmins of Somnath that then God Siva was the greatest of the gods and that it was his hostility to the other gods that had been responsible for their overthrow by the idol breaker. Mahmud made careful preparation for his march through the Indian desert and reached Sahambhari (Sambhar) and thence Anhilvad in 1025. Bhimadeva I Solanki fled from his capital and Mahmud, after defeating his army, arrived at Somnath and captured the fort in spite of its vigorous defence. Subsequently he saw the great temple with "the revenues of 10,000 villages, 1,000 priests, 300 barbers and 350 dancing girls", with the big *linga* nine feet high above the floor and fifteen feet on the whole daily bathed in the Ganges water carried over a distance of 750 miles and garlanded with Kashmir flowers. He was offered a huge sum of money if he would spare the idol and against the advice of some of his own followers he broke it on the plea that he was a breaker not seller of idols and sent the fragments to Ghazni, Mecca and Medina, though the truth of the story has recently been called in question. With enormous treasures, he returned to Anhilvad and reached Multan via Sindh, avoiding the Sambhar route in order to safeguard his booty from the Indian army advancing to contest his retreat, though he experienced some trouble from the Jats. He returned to Ghazni in 1026, and the fame of his Somnath achievement spread in the Muslim world, and the Khalif honoured him with titles (17) His last Indian expedition in 1027 punished the Jats for their attack on his army during his return from Somnath. In his last years, he suffered from malaria, caught during his last Indian campaign, consumption and diarrhoea, and still was busy suppressing rebellions within the empire and carrying on his usual administrative work.

He died in 1030 at the age of 59. His extensive empire consisted of Afghanistan, most of Persia and the Panjab, but his sphere of influence stretched from the Tigris to the Ganges and Allahabad and from the Caspian and Aral Seas and Trans Oxiana to the Arabian Sea, Rajputana and Kathiawar—a vast region about 2,000 miles in length and about 1,400 miles in width.<sup>1</sup>

**Mahmud's Character** Mahmud was kind and affectionate to two of his three brothers, but his special treatment of Ismail was forced upon him by the favoritism of his father. In spite of his strictness, he was considerate to his officers and even to rebels against his authority. But, in the choice of his ministers he was not influenced by considerations other than their ability and fitness. His private life was pure, and he drank moderately. But his attachment to a Turkish slave excited the imagination of romancers. He did not exceed the Koranic number of four wives and his seven sons were properly trained and well treated. He was a courageous soldier of the Homeric type and the most brilliant general of his age. He was more than a man of war, he was a scholar, an author and a great patron of learning. He was a pious Sunni (orthodox sect) conforming to the dictates of the Koran with unquestioned faith in God to whom he appealed for help on the battle field. Though a friend of the poor he was no friend of non-Sunni Muslims whom he persecuted. As regards his attitude towards the Hindus, he gave them protection at Ghazni. It is said that the object of his Indian invasions was conversion of the Hindus and also that he was more ambitious and greedy than fanatical. Though he did not generally force them to embrace Islam he gave facilities for their conversion and extended concessions to the converted. To defend his destruction of Hindu temples by pointing out that it was effected in the course of warfare in order to get at the treasures accumulated and hidden in them is one-sided and overlooks the humiliation to which the idols were subjected even after they had been broken to pieces. If his objective was not conversion it is difficult to see what purpose his

<sup>1</sup> M. Nazim *The Life and Times of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna* (1931) pp. 168-69.

decoration of temples and idols would have served other than the glorification of Islam in a way most objectionable to the Hindus, and we cannot therefore exonerate him completely from the charge of fanaticism though we cannot but concede that the destruction of monuments to some extent in the course of protracted warfare is inevitable in order to break the resistance of the enemy by seizing his wealth and removing his points of vantage. If Mahmud's object was conversion of India his spoliation of temples, without rinding the psychology of the Hindus, would have ill served his purpose and a great sovereign of his type could not but have perceived the discordance between his aims and his means. Therefore it is hard to resist the conclusion that Mahmud was to a certain extent fanatical. Further his temper was autocratic, and he would not tolerate any other point of view than his own. But, on the whole, the greatness of the man is unquestionable.

**His Achievements.** As a conqueror, Mahmud was a magnificent success. He extended his father's kingdom to such an extent that before his own death he partitioned it between two of his sons. The sphere of his military operations was wider than his annexations, and his activity was unceasing for more than thirty years. His victories were due not only to the weaknesses and follies of his victims but also to his military genius. Though he did not innovate on the military practices of his age he made the best use of the methods of warfare in vogue. Though his soldiers belonged to different nationalities, in spite of their religious unity, he maintained firm control over them. His personal courage and his passion for living dangerously inspired his followers and he was not terrified by natural obstacles neither big rivers nor extensive deserts checked the course of his victorious career. The rapidity of his movements confounded his adversaries. Though he missed his aim on a few occasions, he did not taste defeat, and his enemies sometimes abjectly surrendered to him without striking a blow for their freedom. His audacious strategy during his penultimate Indian expedition has immortalised his name. He was not only a great general but also a great king. Besides his great

qualities, intellectual and moral, he was an admirer and patron of learning. He provided Ghazni with a great mosque

and other buildings, a University and a library. As a Patron of Culture His tomb and *minar*, or tower of victory, alone exist now. His silver *tanka* minted at

Mahmudpur (Lahore) exhibits his name and the Muslim *kalima*, or confession of faith, in Sanskrit. His court was adorned by Firdausi 'the Persian Homer', the author of the great epic, the *Shah nama*. Uthi, a historian. Baihaki, the Oriental Pepys. Unsuri, the poet laureate, 'the greatest genius of the age' and above all, from our point of view, Alberuni (973—1048), the author

of the *Tarikh-i Hind* (1030), who along with Firdausi was not generously treated by Mahmud. He was not only a scientist and philosopher but also a Sanskritist. He was an expert in astronomy, mathematics, physics, chemistry, mineralogy, geography and chronology, and it is no easy task to translate his work. He followed Mahmud to India, lived in the Punjab, studied Sanskrit, and acquainted himself with Hindu customs and culture. He admired the *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavad Gita* and was profoundly impressed with the achievements of the Hindus in many fields of learning. His *Tarikh* is an invaluable guide to the study of ancient India in general and of Indian culture in particular. He translated many astronomical and philosophical works from Sanskrit into Arabic. He notes the defective historical and chronological sense of the Hindus and their supreme contempt for the learning of other peoples, born of their consciousness that they were the most learned people in the world, if anybody told them that there were great scholars in Persia he would be regarded as an ignoramus or a liar. His appreciation of the Hindu intellectual achievements without the prejudice natural to a Muslim is truly remarkable. Alberuni's writings almost seem to be the work of some deeply read modern European.\* Avicenna, the great master of philosophy and medicine, whose works dominated Europe from the twelfth to the seventeenth century, refused to go to the court of Mahmud of Ghazni. Though

\* Sykes, *op cit.*, II p. 60

Mahmud was constantly on the watch to crush rebellions within his empire keeping himself in touch with the administration during the closing years of his reign and though he gave much attention to the proper administration of justice, he did not consolidate his conquests. He succeeded only imperfectly in maintaining peace and order and ensuring the safety of person and property. His government was an absolute despotism, kept intact by his ability, prestige and vigilance. His death was followed by the successful reign of his son Masud, but the latter was defeated in 1040 by the Seljuk Turks, who seized Ghazni in 1117 and made the Yamini Bahram king. In 1150 he was defeated by a chief of Ghor, and the Yamini lost Ghazni and retired to the Panjab. Ghazni was incorporated in the kingdom of Ghor in 1173, in 1187 Muhammad of Ghor ended the dynasty of Mahmud of Ghazni, and put the last Yamini, Khusrū Malik, to death in 1201.

#### SECTION IV THE SOLANKIS OF ANHILVAD

Anhilvad (Patan on the Sarasvati, Gujarat), the foundation of the Chapotkatas in the eighth century, was included in the Gurjara Pratihara Empire, whose decline, coupled with that of the Rastrakutas in the second half of the tenth century, led to the establishment of the Solankis (Chalukyas = Chaulukyas) by Mularaja I (c 961—c 996) probably the son of a Chapotkata princess, by the overthrow of his maternal uncle, the last Chagotkata. He came into conflict with the Chahamanas, the Paramaras and the Western Chalukyas of Kalyani and with the rulers of Cutch and Sindh. He was a worshipper of Siva at Somnath. After Chamundaraja (996—1010) and Durlabharaja (1010—1022) came Bhimadeva I (1022—1064), during the early part of whose reign occurred the expedition of Mahmud of Ghazni to Somnath. Though indigenous chronicles and inscriptions are available for this period of Gujarat history there is no reference in them to that destructive raid. It may be remembered that there is no reference to Alexander's invasion of India in indigenous records. Bhimadeva regained his capital after the invader's departure.

and was involved in the conflicts of his neighbours. He contributed to the ultimate fall of Bhoja I Paramara and of Karna Kalachuri. The records of these dynasties claiming victories over one another are conflicting and hard to harmonise. Bhimadeva I was succeeded by Karnadeva I (1064—1094) whose reign witnessed the building of temples, the foundation of a city named after him and other pacific activities. He was the patron of Bilhana. He was followed by Jayasimha Siddharaja (1094—1144) who warred with Malwa for twelve years, overthrew both Naravarmaṇ and Yasovarman, and annexed the country. He and Madanavarmaṇ Chandella claim to have won victories over each other. Jayasimha maintained friendly relations with Yasah Karna Kalachuri and Govinda-chandra Gahadavala. He is said to have been successful in his war with the Arabs of Sindh. From the find spots of his inscriptions, we may be sure of his possession of Gujarat, Kathiawar, Cutch, Malwa and Southern Rajputana. He founded the Simha era of 1113-4. Though he patronised Jains like Hemachandra, he was a staunch Saiva who built many temples, constructed a great lake and encouraged the study of logic, astrology, and the *Puranas*. As he had no son, Kumarapala (1144—1173) his relation, succeeded him after a short struggle, with the help of the Jains, and rooted out all opposition to his rule. Like his predecessor he waged wars with the Chahamanas of Sakambhari, the Paramaras, the Kalachuris and some minor chiefs. The Jain authorities describe his conversion to Jainism under the influence of his *guru* Hemachandra. He eschewed meat and wine and interdicted the slaughter of animals throughout his kingdom making it a capital crime. The curious story is narrated that a merchant was punished with the confiscation of his property for killing a louse, and with

patronage of Jainism was due to his desire to secure the continued support of the Jains who had helped him to the throne and for suspecting the genuineness of his faith in Jainism. He and his predecessor ruled over an extensive kingdom, built partly on the ruins of that of the Paramaras and raised their dynasty to power and prestige. The next ruler was Jayapala (1173—1176) the brother's son of Humarapala who followed an anti-Jain policy and is said to

have executed Ramachandra, the famous Jain author and disciple of Hemachandra, and who Bhimadeva II was killed by one of his officers. After Mularaja II (1176—1178) came Bhimadeva II (1178—1241), who defeated Muhammad of Ghor in the very year of his own accession to the throne. In 1197 Kutb ud-din looted Anhilvad after a struggle for two years and an initial defeat inflicted on him by Bhimadeva II. The Solanki dynasty was overthrown by Ala ud din Khilji towards the close of the thirteenth century (1297) its history is indebted to Hemachandra's historical work, which was completed by another Jain monk in 1256, and to the *Prabandhachintamani* (1305) of the Jain Acharya Merutunga.

## SECTION V THE PARAMARAS OF UJJAIN AND DHAR

Upendra, the founder of the Paramara dynasty, was followed by Vamsimha I and Siyaka I. It was Vakpatiraja I the fourth prince who raised the status of his family. Vamsimha II (first half of the tenth century) held Dhara and came into conflict with the Pratiharas who dislodged him from Malwa. He retired to Gujarat and became feudatory to the

Siyaka II Rashtrakutas, or continued to be subordinate to them. His successor, Harsha Siyaka II (c. 948—c. 974) took advantage of the decline of the Gurjara Pratiharas and the Rashtrakutas, and re-established his power in Malwa. Dhanapala the author of the *Paiyalachchhi*, a Prakrit dictionary (972-3), lived at his court. Vakpatiraja II Munja (974—

995) came into conflict with the neighbouring powers the Kalachuris, the Solankis and the Western Chalukyas of Kalyani, and his successful martial career ended in his defeat by Taila II of Kalyani. That he was a poet is vouched for by epigraphical and literary references and

by the quotation of his verses in later works. He patronised Padmagupta who wrote later the *Narasahasankacharita*, the brothers, Dhananjaya and Dhanika writers on dramaturgy, and Halayudha the author of a commentary on a metrical work. He built many temples, and excavated a tank at Dhar, called Munjasagara. He was succeeded by his brother Sindhuraja Narasahasanka (995—1010). Padmagupta's work contains references to the king's victories mostly of the conventional type, but not without historical significance\*. Sindhuraja's victories were qualified by his failure against Chamundaraja Solanki.

**Bhoja I** Bhoja I (1010—1055) the greatest of the Paramaras, was a renowned warrior. He seems to have wiped off the disgrace of Munja's defeat by vanquishing Jayasimha II Chalukya of Kalyani. He conquered Indraratha, a feudatory of the Gangas of Kalinga, and the rulers of North Konkan. He was victorious over Gangayadeva Kalachuri but not lucky in his attack on Vidyadhara Chandella and the chief of Gwalior. But he was able to seize Kanauj and inflict a defeat on the Chahamanas of Sakambhari though he failed against another branch of the Chahamanas. He triumphed over Bhimadeva I Solanki, but finally was overthrown by the joint efforts of Somesvara I of Kalyani, Bhimadeva of Anhilvad and Lakshmi Karna of Tripuri. The original capital of the Paramaras was Dhara (Dhar, Dhar state Central India). Under Siyaka II, Ujjain was the chief city. Bhoja I remodelled Dhar and made it his capital. His chief minister was Rohaka. His generals Kulachandra (a Jain) Sada and Suraditya, contributed to the expansion of the kingdom which extended from Banswara to Nasik and from Kaira to Bhilsa. Though his warlike career ended in a tragedy, he played a distinguished part in the military annals of his age but never came into contact with Mahmud of Ghazni. He lived up to a great ideal described in one of his inscriptions. Of wealth which is as fleeting as a flash of lightning.

\* D. C. Ganguly *History of the Paramara Dynasty* (1933) pp. 65-77



on a bubble of water, there are two good uses and only two one is its employment in charities and the other is the maintenance thereby of other men's fame. So many works relating to several subjects have been attributed to him that the doubt is natural whether he was their author or patron. But it is unquestionable that he was not only a great patron of letters, but also a distinguished writer. We have no real knowledge to disprove his claim to polymathy exhibited in a large variety of works. The *champu* named after him, called also the *Ramayana-champu*, is a widely appreciated work belonging to the literary form which combines verse and prose. His *Sarastati-lanthabharana* and *Sringarapralasa* are treatises on poetics the *Yuktikalpataru* deals with *uti* or politics. He is said to have written on horses and their diseases. He commented on the *Yoga Sutra* in his valuable *Rajamartanda*, which discusses concentration from various points of view. His *Samasanganasutradhara* deals with architecture, town planning, and other allied subjects, and his *Tattvapralasa* with Saivism. The scholars at his court were Dhanapala and his brother Sobhana and probably Sita, the poetess. Many others must have flourished along with them, but we have no reliable information regarding the former. Bhoja was a great builder but his buildings were destroyed or turned into mosques after the Muslim conquest of Malwa. The Kamalmaula Mosque at Dhar, surmised to be Bhoja's *Sala* or College exhibits on its two pillars two charts, alphabetical and grammatical, the first in the form of a single snake and the second of two intertwined snakes†. He founded Bhojpur (near Bhopal) and excavated a grand lake near it more than 250 square miles in area, showing wonderful engineering skill, in the fifteenth century the lake was filled up and converted into agricultural land by Hoshang Shah, Sultan of Malwa.

\* A. B. Keith *A History of Sanskrit Literature* (1928), p. 53

† P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar *Bhoja Raja* (1931) between pages 98 and 99.

A Siva temple named after Bhoja exists in the same place. It is not known definitely whether the Iron Pillar at Dhar 43 feet 4 inches in height belongs to his reign or to that of Arjunavarman (thirteenth century). In 1034 was made the

The Statue of Sarasvati image of Sarasvati intended for her temple at Dhar which was Bhoja's College as well now in the British Museum which is described as a *chef d'oeuvre* of rare beauty in its exquisite serenity of pose in its entrancing and balancing rhythm in the elegance and suavity of its aquiline features, and in the general restraint in the treatment of the anatomy

Bhoja's philosophy of religion which is almost free from any exaggeration. Bhoja was well disposed towards Jainism and held assemblies representing various sects which discussed the problem of salvation and concluded as follows: By meditation one obtains salvation regardless of the religion to which one adheres. This is indicative of his philosophical outlook in religion.

• **His Successors** Bhoja I was succeeded by his son Jayasinha I (1055—1060) who appears to have been subordinate to Lakshmi Karna Kalachuri. Udayaditya (1060—1087) probably the brother of Bhoja I seems to have usurped the throne. He defeated that Kalachuri ruler and rehabilitated the fortunes of Malwa which had fallen low after Bhoja's death. He built the Nilakanthesvara temple at Udayapur which exists now in good condition and is the best type of Northern Indian architecture of the age. At Un (a village in Indore State) there are a number of Hindu and Jain temples of the period of that ruler. With the exception of Khajuraho Un is the only place in Northern India where we find so many ancient monuments together. He was followed by Lakshmanadeva (1087—1097?) who triumphed over Yasah Karna Kalachuri and perhaps over the Cholas and the descendants of Mahmud of Ghazni. The next rulers were Naravarma and his son Yasovarman whose known dates are 1097—1111 and 1134—1142 respectively. During this period Malwa was conquered by the Solankis and their control over it is clear from 1137 to 1173. After Yasovarman's death the remaining dominions of the Paramaras were divided among

his successors The difficulties of the Solankis after the death of Kumarapala provided the opportunity for the Paramara recovery of Malwa Vindhya-varman regained Dhar about 1192 and his successor Subhata-varman consolidated his position, probably during 1192—1211, so that his son Arjunavarman (1211—1215) was able to recall in some degree the times of Munja and Bhoja. A Sanskrit drama *Parijatamanjari* by Madaga Arjunavarman in four Acts inscribed on two slabs in the mosque at Dhar—two Acts on one slab and two other Acts on another slab which is missing—eulogises Arjunavarman, who commented on the *Amarusataka*. After his death the Paramaras declined slowly. In 1234 Iltutmish of the Slave Dynasty and in 1292 Ala ud din Khilji plundered Malwa, which was finally conquered by the latter in 1305. The Paramaras were devoted to Siva and patronised Brahmanism though Jainism was in a flourishing condition in their kingdom, thanks to the encouragement it received from Munja, Bhoja, Naravarman, Vindhya-varman and Arjunavarman.

## SECTION VI THE KALACHURIS OF TRIPURI

The Kalachuris whose inscriptions are found from the sixth century claim to be descended from the epic Haiharyas, and their use of the Traikutaka or Chedi era of 248-9 need not connect them with the Traikutakas and the Abhiras. They were powerful before the advent of the Chalukyas of Badami and the Gurjara Pratiharas, from Bundelkhand to Gujarat and Nashik, chiefly in the upper Narmada Valley, and the growth of the Chalukya and Pratihara Empires restricted their power to Dahala (the region around Jubbulpore), with their capital at Tripuri (Tewar, six miles from Jubbulpore). Hence they are called the Haiharyas or Kalachuris of Chedi, Dahala or Tripuri. The historical founder of the dynasty was Kokkalla I (c. 875—925) who strengthened his position by marriage alliances with the Rashtrakutas and the Chandellas and by friendly relations with the Pratiharas. His successor Sankaragana I with surnames like Prasiddhadhavalaka was subordinate to the Rashtrakutas. It was probably the next ruler Balaharsha who was defeated by Yasovarman I Chandel. His brother Yuvaraja I came into conflict with Rashtrakutas and was overcome also.

940, his inscriptions speak of his frequent contacts with Saiva *Sannyasins*. His son Lakshmanaraja added to the power of his family by raiding Kathiawar and Bengal in the latter half of the tenth century, and followed in the footsteps of his father in patronising Saiva ascetics. Sankaragana II was a Vaishnava. His brother Yuvaraja II was defeated by Munja Paramara who plundered Tripuri. His successor Kakkalla II was probably subordinate to Vidyadhara Chandella and, like many of his predecessors, patronised Saivism. His son Gangeyadeva Vikramaditya (c 1030—1041) occupied Allahabad, and is said to have raided the Panjab, Bengal and Orissa, and defeated the Chalukyas of Kalyani. He was a great conqueror, though he was beaten by Bhoja I Paramara. He was the only member of his dynasty to issue coins, which contain his name and the figure of Lakshmi and are remarkable in their variety—gold, silver and copper. He built a temple probably to Siva, to whom he was devoted. He was followed by his son Lakshmi Karna (c 1041—1073) who made extensive conquests and proved his claim to be regarded as "one of the greatest Indian conquerors". He overthrew Bhoja Paramara with the help of the rulers of Kalyani and Anhilvad. He conquered the Chandellas and the Palas. His inscriptions are found in Bengal and the United Provinces, and it is clear that he established his power from Gujrat to Bengal and from the Ganges to the Mahanadi. He assumed the title of Lord of the three Kalingas. He founded a city near Tripuri and a temple at Benares called Karnamenu and, like his father, was a Saiva. Some have compared him with Napoleon. But at last he sustained a series of defeats at the hands of the Palas, the Chandellas, the Paramaras, the Solankis and the Chalukyas of Kalyani. His son and successor was Yasah Karna (1073—1125), who is said to have raided as far as the Vengi kingdom and North Bihar. The rise of the Gahadavalas affected his position in the Ganges basin, and he was overpowered by the Chandellas and the Paramaras. Ganga-Karna's dynastic position was further weakened by the revival of the Chandella power under Madanavarma. The next rulers, Narasimha (c 1155—1170) and his brother Jayasimha, recovered a part of the lost Kalachuri territory.

from the Chandellas Vijayasimha (1180—1195) and his successor Ajayasimha are mere names in the dynastic list and the Kalachuris were conquered by the Delhi Sultans between 1251 and 1309 though they seem to have continued as a local power near Tripuri till the commencement of the fifteenth century when they were superseded by the Gond

## SECTION VII THE CHANDELLAS OF BUNDELKHAND \*

*Nannuka*, the founder of the Chandella dynasty was in possession of Khajuraho under the Pratiharas in the second quarter of the ninth century. The fortunes of his family were promoted by Vakpati and his sons Jayasakti and Vijaya sakti. Jayasakti or Jeja ruled over the territory called after him Jejabhukti or Bundelkhand. Vijayasakti's son Rahila and the latter's son Harsha the father of Yasovarman I were loyal to the Pratiharas during the dark days of their conflict with the Rashtrakutas in the first half of the tenth century. Harsha co-operated with the loyalists in the restoration of the Pratihara Empire but at the same time strengthened his own position by matrimonial connections with the Chahamanas. **Yasovarman I** and perhaps with the Kalachuris. Yasovarman I captured Kalinjar apparently from the Rashtrakutas and his military achievements which loom large in the inscriptions of his successor Dhanga must have made him a dangerous feudatory of his sovereign. He built a temple to Vishnu at Khajuraho and provided it with a great tank. His son **Dhanga** and successor Dhanga (954—1002) whose inscriptions after 955 do not mention the Pratiharas as his superiors must have established even in form the independence of his dynasty. His possession of Kalinjar and Gwalior strengthened his position in Central India and probably he seized Allahabad. He does not seem to have participated in any league with the Shahis or shared their defeat by Sabuktigin and Mahmud of Ghazni. He must have contributed to the construction of the famous temples of Khajuraho assigned to the tenth and eleventh centuries—the temples of Jina natha and Vaidyanatha. His chief minister was Prabhasa. It is said to have committed religious suicide by drowning at Allahabad. Nothing is known about his successor Ganda who

may be assigned to the period, 1002—1019. He was followed by Vidyadhara (c 1019—1051?). He meted out condign punishment to Rajyapala Pratihara for his abject surrender to Mahmud of Ghazni, and effected the extinction of the imperial line of Kanauj, thus completing the work of his predecessor Dhang. He was more than a match for Bhoja I Paramara and Kokkalla II Kalachuri. His authority extended from the Chambal to the Narmada. Hence he is described by Muslim writers as 'the most powerful prince of the time'. In 1021 when Mahmud of Ghazni invaded India and confronted Vidyadhara the latter fled, according to one version of the story, but Dr Ray, relying on earlier chronicles, thinks that a terrible but indecisive battle was fought and that the Chandella ruler "beat a strategic retreat under cover of the night".\* In the following year there was another conflict between the two and Mahmud failed against Gwalior and Kalinjar. There is no doubt that he found the Chandella kingdom under Vidyadhara to be very different from the Pratihara dominions under Rajyapala. The next Chandella ruler was Vijayapala who was followed by Devavarman about 1051. We do not know the final date of Vidyadhara who must have ceased to rule before that date. During the reigns of Vijayapala, Devavarman and Kirtivarman the Chandellas were reduced to subjection by Lakshmi Karna Kalachuri. Kirtivarman's gold coins are close imitations of those of Gangeyadeva Kalachuri. After Lakshmi Karna's defeat and death about 1073, Kirtivarman revived the Chandella power, and Krishnamisra's drama, *Prabodhachandrika*, refers to the services of his chief feudatory Gopala to Kirtivarman against Karna, Gopala's victory over Karna leading to the rise of Kirtivarman is compared to the victory of discrimination over delusion leading to the use of knowledge in conformity with the allegorical character of the play. Besides patronising that dramatist Kirtivarman probably built a Siva temple at Mahoba and other edifices at Kalinjar and Jaigarh and excavated lakes at Mahoba and Chanderi (in and near Bundelkhand). His only known date is 1098. He was

\* Ray op cit II (1936), p 691

succeeded by Sallal shanavarman and the latter by Jayavarman whose copper coins exhibit the figure of Hanuman After Prithivivarman came his son Madanavarman (c 1129—1163)

**Madana-  
varman**

His inscriptions prove his possession of the traditional seats of Chandella power—Khajuraho Kalinjar, Mahoba and Ajaigarh He came into conflict with Malwa, Gujarat and Chedi, and maintained amicable relations with the Gahadavalas His dominions bounded by the Betwa and the Jumna included Bundelkhand and the northern part of Baghelkhand and the territories to the south as far as the neighbourhood of Jubbulpore The next important ruler, Paramardi (1167—1202) was defeated by

**Paramardi**

the Chahamanas Prithviraj III, who is said to have seized Mahoba and raided Kalinjar about 1183 He was supported in his troubles by the Gahadavalas and before he could rehabilitate his position, Kutb ud-din Aibak besieged Kalinjar in 1202 and captured it and Mahoba in the following year But Trailokyavarman (1202—1241) retook Kalinjar about 1205 and re-established the power of his dynasty, which was overthrown by Ala ud-din Khilji in 1303 But Kalinjar continued to be under the Chandellas Rani Durgavati who fought against Akbar and died in 1564 was a Chandella princess, and Kalinjar fell finally in 1569

## SECTION VIII THE CHAHAMANAS OF SAMBHAR AND AJMER

The Chahamanas or Chauhans were in possession of Sakambhari (Sambhar, Rajputana) on the banks of the lake of the same name as early as the seventh century They became feudatory to the Gurjara Pratiharas in the ninth century Vigraharaja II reigned about 973 and established the independence of his dynasty He is said to have defeated Mularaja I of Anhilvad Prithviraj I ruled about 1105 His son Ajayaraja founded the city of Ajayameru or Ajmer The next ruler Arnoraja, whose two inscriptions are dated 1139, came into conflict with Jayasimha Siddharaja and Kumrapala of Anhilvad before 1150 His successor Vigraha-  
**Vigraharaja  
IV** raja IV (1153—1164) extended his dominions by warring with the successors of Mahmud of Ghazni in the Panjab He is said to have conquered Delhi from the Tomaras who had founded that

city about 993—4 and continued in power in its neighbourhood. At Ajmer are found in the chief mosque on slabs substantial portions of two dramas—the *Harakali nataka* of Vighraharaja showing the influence of Bharavi and describing the glory of Siva and the *Lalitavighraha nataka*, dealing with Vighraharaja's love affairs. He founded a college at Ajmer and was influenced by the example of Bhoja of Dhar. After

Prithviraja II (1164—1170) and Somesvara Prithviraja III (1170—1177) came the latter's son Prithviraja III (1177—1192), whose achievements are chronicled in his protegee Chand's Hindi epic *Prithviraj Raso*, a difficult work of great literary value, and in the Sanskrit *Prithvirajavijaya* the latter being of greater historical value as its genealogy is confirmed by inscriptions. He is said to have carried away the daughter of Jayachandra Gahadavala about 1175, and overthrown Paramardi Chandella. The foundation of an era in supersession of the Vikrama era is attributed to him and explained as the offspring of his hostility to Jayachandra Gahadavala who traced his ancestry to Raja Vikramā. His greatest victory was gained over Muhammad of Ghor in 1191 at Tarain (14 miles from Thanessai), but the vanquished were not pursued by the victors. Sultan Muhammad, returned to India in 1192, defeated Prithviraja in the same place and captured and executed him. Ajmer was sacked, and the Chahamanas dynasty of Sambhar and Ajmer practically came to an end though Hariraja, Prithviraja's brother, continued to rule till 1194, in which year Govindaraja, perhaps the son of Prithviraja founded his dynasty at Ranthambhor which was overthrown by Alauddin Khilji in 1301.

## SECTION IX THE GAHADAVALAS OF BENARES AND KANAUJ

The Gahadavalas or Gaharwars are thought to be of Karnata or South Indian origin, but the theory that they were Rashtrakutas is not tenable. The question of their origin is difficult to answer satisfactorily. They rose to power under Chandradeva (c 1080—1100) and ruled over Benares,



Ayodhya and Kanauj During the reign of Madanachandra (1100—1114) his son Govindachandra (1114—1155) was all in all and the coins of the period indicate the growing importance of the Gahadavalas. The inscriptions of the latter, exceeding forty, establish his influence and power during the first half of the twelfth century. He clashed with the Yaminis of Lahore and the Palas, and advanced as far as Patna and Monghyr, thus provoking the naval expedition of the Senas up the Ganges. He was hostile to the Kalachuris but friendly towards the Chandellas and the Cholas. He imposed a tax called *turushka danda*, which probably means a tax for the defence of the kingdom against Muslims, or a poll tax on Muslims. His gold and copper coins depart from his father's type and imitate the Kalachuri<sup>1</sup> Lakshmi type and their obverse contains his name and a *trisula* (trident). One of his four wives, Kumaradevi, was a Buddhist. His minister Lakshmaudhara made a digest of law called the *Smritikalpataru*. He was succeeded by his third son Vijayachandra (1155—1170) and the latter by Jayachandra (1170—1193). They patronised the Mahakavi Sri Harsha, author of the *Naishadha* and of a great work called *Khandana Khanda Khadya*, defending Advaita. Jayachandra seems to have maintained his position in South Bihar intact against the Senas. The romance of his daughter's abduction by Prithviraja III has already been alluded to. He allied himself with the Chandellas against that Chahamanas. In 1193 Muhammad of Ghori defeated him near Chandwar (Etawah District, U P), and the Gahadavala dynasty practically disappeared though Harischandra maintained his position till 1200. The Gahadavalas were devoted to Brahmanism in all its forms, and favoured Buddhism as is clear from the fact that Queen Kumaradevi was a Buddhist.

#### SECTION X THE PALAS OF BENGAL AND BIHAR—(Contd.)

Narayanapala (857—911) was followed by his son Rajyapala (911—935) whose position *vis à vis* the Gurjaras was not bettered. Under Gopala II and Vigrahapala II (935—992), there was a revival of the power of the Palas as evidenced by their Bodhi-Gaya and Nalanda inscriptions.<sup>2</sup>

a region which had been occupied by the Gurjaras. But the expansion of the Chandella Kingdom created a new danger. Further, during the period 911—992, Northern Bengal was under the Kambojas who are supposed to be Tibetans or Mongolians. The Kamboja usurpation was ended by Mahipala I (992—1010) whose inscriptions are found from Benares to the Brahmaputra including Northern Bengal. But his imperial efforts were rendered nugatory by the activities of the Chalukyas of Kalyani, the Kalachuris and the Cholas, and the Palas were confined to a small part of Bengal and Bihar by the Sura and Chandra kings of Western and Eastern Bengal respectively. The power of Nayapala (1010—1055) was confined to Bihar, and he came into conflict with Lakshmi Karna Kalachuri. Vigrahapala III (1055—1081) also clashed with that Kalachuri and is said to have defeated him and married his daughter. The Chalukyas of Kalyani are said to have vanquished the Gauda king. During the second half of the eleventh century, the dynasty of Varmanas was in possession of Eastern Bengal and parts of Northern and Western Bengal. Thus the decline of the Palas proceeded rapidly. The death of Vigrahapala complicated the situation owing to the mutual hostilities of his three sons. Mahipala II ascended the throne (1082) and imprisoned his brothers, Surapala II (1083) and Ramapala (1084—1126) and a Kaivarta (name of a tribe) chief revolted and expelled the king who died in a battle with the rebel. Surapala succeeded to the throne, and many feudatories revolted. Finally Ramapala defeated the Kaivartas with the help of the loyalists and gained the throne. He founded the city of Ramavati to commemorate his triumph which is described in the *Ramapalacharitra* of Sandhyakara Nandin, the son of Ramapala's minister of war and peace. He is credited with some fresh conquests including Assam. At last he drowned himself in the Ganges because of the death of his maternal uncle who had supported him in his late troubles and tribulations and one year before his death, he seems to have abdicated. Under Ramapala's son Kumarapala (1126—1130) Assam became independent. His son Gopala III was probably murdered by Mudanapala (1130—1150) who ascended

the throne but was expelled from Bengal about 1138 by the Senas. His authority continued in South Bihar—Patna and Monghyr. After him came Govindapala (1150—1162) who ruled at Gaya, hemmed in by the Gahadavalas and the Senas. Perhaps Indradjumnā (pala) was the ruler of South Bihar dislodged by Muhammad bin Bakhtyar in 1197, but this is denied by Dr Ray.\* Though the Palas were staunch Buddhists patronising literature art the tantric cult and the University of Nālanda they were well disposed towards Brahmanism.

## SECTION XI THE SENAS OF BENGAL

Samantasena (c 1050—1075), the founder of the Sena dynasty of Bengal, is described as a Karnata Kshatriya and also as a Brahman.<sup>†</sup> "It is not unlikely that Samantasena, like Mayurasarman, was a Brahman, and like him entered the royal service and adopting a Kshatriya's life soon gained prominence"‡ as a soldier. His family must have joined the Karnata invasions of Northern India in the eleventh century or earlier. Names with the suffix *sena* are found in the lists of Jain Acharyas of the Dharwar District, and Jayasimha II of Kalyani (1015—1042) changed his religion from Jainism to Saivism. Therefore it is thought probable by some scholars that the Senas of Bengal were originally Juns of Karnata who became Saivas and accompanied the northern expedition of the Chalukyas of Kalyani during the reign of Vignahapala III. After Hemantasena (1075—1097) came Vijayasena (1097—1159) who seems to have helped Ramapala against the Kairatas. He married a Sura princess and dislodged the Varmans of Bengal. He expelled Madanapala from Northern Bengal. He is said to have conquered Nepal, Assam and Kalinga and sent a naval expedition up the Ganges. Thus, in the period following the death of Ramapala he founded the Sena Kingdom which included parts of Eastern, Western and Northern Bengal. He assumed the titles of *Paramamahesvara* and *Aricrishabhasankara*, built a Siva temple, excavated a lake

founded Vijayapura and patronised Umapati. He was succeeded by Ballalasena (1159—1185) who maintained intact the position he had inherited from his father. His kingdom was divided into five provinces and he had three capitals—Gauda, Vikramapura and Suvarnagrama. He completed the *Danasagara* on ceremonial gifts in 1170 with the help of his guru Aniruddha. He left the *Adbhutasagara* on omens unfinished. He was devoted to Siva, his titles being *Parama mahesvara* and *Nissankasankara*. His son and successor Lakshmanasena (1185—1206) is said to have conquered and erected pillars of victory in Kalunga, Assam, Benares and Allahabad, but probably he raided those regions. He was a great patron of learning; the five gems of his court are Umapati, Jayadeva (author of the *Gita Govinda*), Dhoyi (the *Pavana duta* in imitation of Kalidasa's *Meghaduta*), Halayudha (the *Brahmana sariasva*) and Sudharadasa (the *Saduktikarnamrita* in which some of the king's verses are quoted). Lakshmanasena\* completed the *Adbhutasagara* of his father. He assumed the titles of *Madanasankara* and *Paramavaishnava* and was slowly inclining towards Vaishnavism. Muhammad bin Bakhtyar captured and destroyed Nadia (Bengal) in 1199 and made Lakhnauti his capital. The Muslim historian eulogises Lakshmanasena's good government and generosity when he was surprised by the advance party of eighteen horsemen of the Muslim army led by Bakhtyar; he fled barefooted by the back part of his palace. This was the inglorious end of the Sena dynasty, but Lakshmanasena's successors ruled in Eastern Bengal till about 1230 or 1280.

## SECTION XII MUHAMMAD OF GHOR

**Muhammad's Career** The Yaminis or Ghaznavids were dispossessed of Ghazni which was annexed by Ghiyath ud din of Ghor in 1173. His younger brother Shihab ud din (Muizz ud din Muhammad) governed Ghazni and loyally

\* Dr S K Das, *Sanskrit Literature under the Sena Kings of Bengal*, Vol. II of *Eastern and Indian Studies*, pp. 50-71.

The occasional checks to his martial progress only stimulated him to fresh efforts crowned with final success. He was a conqueror in the real sense of the term in so far as he administered the conquered territory and strengthened his hold on it. In short his work in India was constructive and permanent, 'from the days of Muhammad Ghori to the catastrophe of the Indian Mutiny, there was always a Muhammadan king upon the throne of Delhi'. Compared with Mahmud of Ghazni's But, though Mahmud of Ghazni was a military genius and the sovereign of a mighty empire his work was impermanent and his activities were oppressive and destructive to India and merely added to the ephemeral glory of Ghazni and to his personal prestige. Unlike Muhammad, he was an undefeated general in spite of his disappointment on a few occasions, but his efforts did not lead to the permanent establishment of Islam in India. Though he was a great patron of learning—and Muhammad could not show a similar record,—he was more fanatical and less statesmanlike than the other. His unique gold coins contain the image of Goddess Lal shmi in imitation of the Hindu coins of Kanauj.

The triumph of Muhammad of Ghor was due not only to the factors so far mentioned but also to the defects of the Hindu powers overthrown by him and his coadjutors. Causes of the Downfall of the Hindus It is astonishing that, in spite of the valour and courage of the Rajputs and the numerical superiority of the Hindus, they were conquered decisively, though subsequently the conquerors experienced many set backs and vicissitudes of fortune. Rulers of conspicuous ability flourished in Northern India. Munja Paramara and Dhanga Chandella in the tenth century, Bhoja Paramara, Vidyadharma Chandella and the Kalachuris Gangeyadeva and Lakshmi Karna in the eleventh, Govindachandra Gahadavala, the Solankis, Jayasimha Siddharaja and Kumarapala and Prithviraja Chahamana in the twelfth. Further there was Anantavarman Chodaganga in Kalinga, occupying an intermediate position between Northern and Southern India. Therefore the materials for a successful resistance to foreign invasion were not wanting. Various reasons have been assigned

for the downfall of the Hindus some of them being trivial, speculative and misleading. The spotting of Buddhism as the villain of the piece is untenable though in some cases as in Sindh, Buddhist pacifism was disastrous. But the extreme *ahimsa* doctrine of the Jains did not check their martial ardour during our period. Buddhism was prevalent on the eve of the Muslim advent only in some parts of India as in Bengal and Bihar, and even there the Sena ascendancy cannot be overlooked. The Rajputs were staunch Hindus. Therefore during the period in question there was practically no Buddhism to hang on the charge of betraying India to her foreign conquerors. Some have emphasised the increasing addiction of India to vegetarianism and its adverse effects on the national physique and martial spirit. Some have held the caste system responsible for Hindu military inefficiency. The condition of women as well has been pressed into service, though we know that the Muslims did not double their resources by emancipating their women. One writer says that all our woes began with the introduction of the exogamous marriage system among the Hindus ages before their fall, the point here is that the prohibition of *sagotra* marriages restricted the choice of partners in life and weakened the race. But we have already observed that India on the eve of the Muslim conquest did not lack virility or courage. In two respects the Muslims were in a better position than the Hindus, their religious and social unity and their superior military equipment were coupled with their readiness to sacrifice everything for success in a country where their defeat would be particularly disastrous, whereas the Hindu caste system, which was not destructive of military efficiency in indigenous struggles, could not be regarded as a source of strength against a casteless people with a democratic religion. Further the Hindu states on the eve of the foreign invasion had exhausted themselves by their perennial and quixotic conflicts, and their mutual ill will and jealousy made their co-operation against the common enemy almost impossible. We have seen that the opinion that a few confederacies were formed to resist the foreign penetration rests on a slender base and that the Hindu powers were defeated separately. Imperialism in India did not

at a centralised government conducive to the unification and consolidation of the people, the *digvijayas* of Indian dynasts were mostly personal triumphs, and the vanquished became victors in due course and *vice versa*. We noticed during this period a large number of Hindu states frequently carrying on raids into neighbouring and distant regions. In short, disunion and variety were fostered in many ways, and the Hindus unable to hang together hanged separately. Above all, the age was deficient in military ability comparable to that of Mahmud of Ghazni or even to that of Muhammad Ghor and further the Hindus failed to adapt themselves to their new needs. The weakness of their military system against foreigners had been proved many times, but no fruitful reform came out of their bitter experiences. Therefore emphasis is to be laid on the political disunion and defective military equipment of the Hindus in accounting for their failure against the Turkish invaders, Mahmud of Ghazni and Muhammad of Ghor.

### SECTION XIII KASHMIR

**The Utpalas** (*Contd*) Sankatavarman Utpala was succeeded by his son Gopalavarman (902—904), during whose short reign, the Queen Mother, Sugandha, directed the government, carried on love intrigues with the Brahman minister Prabhakaradeva, continued in power after the death of her son, and was killed in 914 in her conflict with the *Tantrins* (a military organisation), functioning as king-makers till the subversion of the Utpala dynasty. Unmattavanti (937—939) was "worse than wicked," according to Kalhaṇa, and amused himself by cutting open the abdomens of pregnant women just to see the foetus. Yasaskaradeva (939—948) the son of Gopalavarman's minister Prabhakaradeva, put an end to the dynasty of Avantivarman, and ascended the throne of Kashmir, but his son Sangramadeva (948—949), a minor, was killed by the chief minister, Parvagupta.

**The Guptas** Parvagupta (945—950) died soon after his usurpation, and was followed by his son Kshemagupta (950—958) who became notorious for his disreputable pleasures and for his infatuation with Queen Didda.

numerous independent states of Kashmir under control but his last years were embittered by the unsuccessful plot of his son Harsha to dethrone him, and his evil ways and pursuit of sensual gratification reduced him to the level of a beast. Harsha

Harsha (1089—1101) exhibited boldness and energy in securing the throne to which his younger brother had succeeded. He was not only a great soldier but also a linguist & poet, a musician and a patron of learning. He loved pomp and display and was particular with regard to his personal appearance. He was a leader of fashion. His gold and silver coins of the elephant type are the only coins of the Lohara dynasty extant and constitute the one break in this monotonous (and much debased) Kashmir series. He continued most of his father's officers. He was accessible to the meanest of his subjects. But plots against his life by his own kith and kin converted him into a tyrant, the Nero of Kashmir. His faulty generosity landed him in financial difficulties and led to his spoliation of temples including the metal images and to an oppressive fiscal system. His morality collapsed and the honour even of his foster mothers and sisters was not spared. His authority was weakened by the revolts of the rural landed aristocracy and treason at court. But the historian Kalhana's father Champaka who was a minister of the king remained faithful to his master. Harsha abandoned his throne, fled and was murdered. Thus miserably died a prince who in his dazzling qualities and monstrous vices as well as in his heterodoxy and traces of incipient insanity probably finds a parallel in Muhammad Tughluk. Kalhana brings out the contrasts in his character and describes him as attractive on all sides and yet repulsive. This accurate picture of his father's patron establishes the impartiality of Kalhana as a historian. After the death of Harsha the history of Kashmir is the history of civil war, famine, corruption and treachery. It was during Jayasimha's reign (1128—1155) that Kalhana wrote his *Rajatarangini* but he was no protégé of that king. From 1150 Kashmir steadily declined. The Lohara dynasty came to an end in 1171. The line of the next elected ruler

\* Brown op cit p 50

† Rny p cit I p 106



of Patan (near Katmandu) descended from Amsuvaiman for twenty years towards the close of the eleventh century. Siva deva continued the line of Bhaskaradeva which lasted to the end of the twelfth century. In the first half of that century a Karnata dynasty like the Sena dynasty in Bengal was established in Tirhut (Northern Bihar) by Nanyadeva claiming suzerainty over Nepal. The Mahayanism of Nepal became mixed up with Saivism.

**Assam** The Prialambha dynasty continued for a century after Vanamala (c 875—900) who was followed by Jayamala, Balavarman and Tjagasimha (c 900—1000). During the period, 800—1000 the Palas of Bengal and Bihar seem to have exercised political power over Assam. In the eleventh century the Palas of Assam superseded the previous dynasty. Ratnapala the most important king ruled in the first half of that century from his capital near Gauhati. He is said to have come into conflict with the Palas of Bengal and Bihar and with the Karnata and Tamil invaders of Bengal. He prohibited meat diet at his capital and professed devotion to Siva and Vishnu. In the first half of the twelfth century Assam was conquered by Ramapala of Bengal and ruled over by his minister Bodhadeva and his successors. Kumarapala the successor of Ramapala lost Assam. The dynasty of Bhaskara (c 1150—1206) came into conflict with the Senas of Bengal under Vijayasena and Lakshmanasena and with Muhammad bin Bakhtyar when he attempted to invade Tibet through Assam in 1205. It was Vallabhadra who seems to have contributed to the tragic retreat of the Muslim army from Assam.

#### SECTION XV THE EASTERN GANGAS OF KALINGANAGARA (Contd.)

Our definite knowledge of Eastern Ganga history begins with Vajrahasta V (1036—1070) who seems to have become independent of the Cholas after the death of Rajendra I Chola. He ruled over the territory corresponding to the Ganjam and Vizagapatnam Districts. His son Rajaraja I Ganga reigned from 1070 to 1076 married Rajasundari the daughter of Kulottunga Chola I. He was succeeded by his son Anantavarman Chodaganga (1076—1147) by that

the Cholas, after a severe struggle, in 949 at Takkolam (near Arkonam, North Arcot District), in which the Chola crown prince Rajaditya lost his life. He received the hearty co-operation of his brother-in-law, Butuga II in his campaigns against the Cholas, and rewarded him with the cession of Banavasi and other territories. His annexation of Tondaimandalam (the region about Kanchi) is vouched for by his numerous inscriptions in the South Arcot, North Arcot and Chingleput Districts which describe him as the captor of Kanchi and Tanjore. He seems to have defeated Sityaka II Paramara, but failed to check the growth of the Paramara power. He succeeded in putting his own candidate on the throne of Vengi. Thus he was supreme in Peninsular India, and from this point of view, he out-distanced even Govinda III. His comparative failure in Northern India was due to the hostility of the Kalachuris after his attack on them during his father's reign, and to the rise of the Chandellas under Yasovarman I and Dhanga. His doings in trans-Vindhyan India fell far short of the achievements of Govinda III who dominated Northern and Southern India, still his ability and generalship made him a remarkable figure, the last great member of the Rashtrakuta dynasty. He patronised the Kannada poet Ponna, upon whom was conferred the title of *Ubhaya-kavichakravarti* as he was proficient in Sanskrit and Kannada. Another Kannada poet, Pampa who composed his *Bharata* in 941, was the protégé of Krishna's feudatory. Pampa and Ponna are two of the three gems of Kannada literature, the third being Ranna. Krishna III was succeeded by his younger brother Khottiga (968—972), and Sityaka II Paramara sacked Malkhed in 972. Karka II (972—973), the nephew of Khottiga, was expelled from the throne in 973 by Taila II, the founder of the Chalukya dynasty of Kalyani; his worthlessness was aggravated by evil advisers. The Rashtrakuta power fell suddenly from the great height it had attained on the eve of Krishna III's death in 968.

Of the fourteen kings of the Rashtrakuta dynasty, Greatness of the Rashtrakutas Dantidurga, Krishna I, Dhruva, Govinda III, Indra III and Krishna III constitute a series of successful rulers we do not come across in any other dynastic history. Amoghavarsha I was great in

some respects there were only three worthless kings. Salai man regarded the Rashtrakutas as "the most feared and powerful rulers of India" in spite of frequent succession disputes, the empire remained intact and in an efficient condition. Active commerce was promoted by their friendship with the Arab merchants. The growing strength of Hinduism (Saivism and Vaishnavism) did not affect the progress of Jainism, which was in a flourishing state owing to its patronage by the Rashtrakutas and their great officers. It is estimated that the Jains formed one-third of the population of the Dakhan. The decline of Buddhism was not hastened by the state, which left it in peace and there were three prosperous Buddhist settlements at Kanheri (near Bombay) and in the Sholapur and Dharwar Districts. The harmony among the various sects existing in the Rashtrakuta dominions did not prevail in the Tamil country. An inscription of 945 at Salotgi (Bijapur District) gives details of a college with 27 boarding houses and 60 acres of land, the income from which was intended for lighting purposes; the head of the college was paid the income from about 250 acres, there were not only endowments by the rich but also payments by all the villagers on occasions of marriage and other ceremonies. Literature was patronised by the Rashtrakutas, and Sanskrit and Kannada authors flourished, most of them being Jains. But Marathi Literature was not important under the Rashtrakutas, whose language Kannada was developed by the Jains who were not conspicuous in the Maratha country. The progress of art was not great, the only products of the age being found at Ellora and Elephanta. Still, "in no other period of Ancient Indian History did the Deccan enjoy the same high political prestige, which it did under the Rashtrakutas. Very few Hindu dynasties have ruled in their full glory for so long a period (more than two centuries)." \*

#### SECTION XVII THE WESTERN CHALUKYAS OF KALYANI

We are not sure of the relationship, if any, of Taila II (973—997), the restorer of the Chalukya power in the Dakhan with Kirtivarman II, the last of the Chalukyas of Badami.

\* Altekar, *The Rashtrakutas and their Times* pp 418-14

His overthrow of Karka II Rashtrakuta in 973 was effected with the help of some Rashtrakuta feudatories and perhaps of the Kalachuris of Tripura as his mother belonged to that family, which had been attacked by Krishna III Rashtrakuta. He overcame the opposition of the other feudatories of the Rashtrakutas and of the Gangas of Talakad. He made Kalyani (the Nizams State) his capital and married the daughter of Karka II. In spite of his splendid achievement, he is said to have been defeated six times by Munja Paramara who however came to grief in his seventh encounter with his veteran adversary in 995. He and his successor patronised the Kannada poet, Ranna. The reigns of Satyasraya (997—1009) and Vikramaditya V (1009—1014) witnessed the ascendancy of Rajaraja I Chola who conquered Gangavadi and Nolambavadi (Southern and Northern Mysore) before 1000, and about 1008 defeated the Chalukyas whose territory was ravaged so mercilessly that women, children and Brahmans were massacred and girls raped. Jayasimha II (Jayidekamalla I) who reigned from 1015 to 1012 was defeated by Rajendra I Chola at Musangi (Nashik the Nizams State) about 1021. Somesvara I Ahavamalla (great in war) ruled from 1012 to 1068 and carried on bitter warfare with the Cholas from the commencement of his reign. He fought with them in 1052 at Koppam (on the Krishna near Kollhapur), and though Rajadhiraja I died, the Cholas won and erected a pillar of victory at Holhapur. He joined the league against Bhoja I Paramara and contributed to his overthrow in 1055 and later defeated Lakshmi Karna of Tripura. In 1062 he was vanquished again by the Cholas at Kudal Sangunam (the confluence of the Krishna and the Tungabhadra). He improved the capital Kalyani. He was a staunch Saiva who is said to have committed suicide by drowning himself in the Tungabhadra in consequence of his sufferings from a fever which his physicians could not cure. Somesvara II (1068—1076) the son of Somesvara I claims to have repulsed the Chola invasion soon after his accession to the throne, but the inscriptions of the Cholas mention their victory and their destruction of the Chalukya city of Hampi. He was a pious Saiva, and during his reign Saivism made rapid progress. He was deposed by his

brother Vikramaditya VI (1076-1127), the most distinguished of his dynasty, who inaugurated his reign by abolishing the Saka era and founding the Chalukya Vikrama era commencing from his accession to the throne. He is also known as Vikramanka and Tribhuvanamalla. He put down the rebellion of his younger brother. He clashed with the Cholas early in his reign. His Hoysala feudatories captured Talakad about 1117 from the Cholas, and became an important power though nominally dependent on their overlord. About 1118 he established his authority over the Vengi province and maintained it intact down to his death, and this was his greatest success over Kulottunga I Chola with whom he had been always on terms of hostility. He governed his extensive empire well. Probably a Jain originally, he became an ardent Saiva in later life. He patronised Bilhana whose *Vikramanka charita* is a defectively historical eulogy of his patron. Vijnanesvara, the jurist and commentator who lived at Kalyani, says "There has not been, there is not, and there will not be, on the surface of the earth a city like Kalyani, and never was a monarch like the prosperous Vikramanka seen or heard of." Inscriptions mention the six queens of the emperor. His son Somesvara III (1127-1136) wrote a famous work in Sanskrit called *Abhilashitartha-hyptaman* or *Manasollasa*, which deals with the acquisition of political power, its retention and its enjoyment, and with intellectual pleasures and amusements of various kinds, and which exhibits his knowledge of "polity, administration of justice, medicine, elephants, alchemy, astrology, arms and rhetoric." Under his sons, Jagadekamalla II (1136-1151), Taila III (1151-1163) and Jagadekamalla III (1163-1184), the Chalukya power declined. The minister Bujala, claiming to be related to the Kalachuris, usurped the throne about 1156, Taila III ruling over a part of the kingdom till 1163. In 1167 Bujala abdicated and his successors ruled till 1183. During this period of Kalachuri usurpation, Virasaivism flourished, its followers being called Virasaivas or Langayats, who worship Siva in his phallic form, reject the authority of the Vedas, disbelieve in the doctrine of rebirth.

**Vikrama  
ditya VI**

**Bujala's  
Usurpation**

**Virsa  
Saivism**

object to child marriage, approve of the re marriage of widows, and cherish an intense aversion to Brahmans, notwithstanding the fact that the founder of their religion (Basava, the minister of Bijjala) was himself a Brahman \* This religious movement became popular at the expense of Jainism and Buddhism in the Kannada country and contributed to the enrichment of Kannada Literature † Somesvara IV (1184—1200) re-

**\*End of the  
Dynasty** established his dynastic power by the overthrow of the last Kalachuri, but his reign witnessed the independence of the Yadavas and the Hoysalas who extended their kingdoms from the northern and southern parts of the Chalukya Empire, which thus came to an end after lasting for about two centuries and a quarter. The coins of the dynasty conform to the Kadamba type (cup shaped), with the substitution of a lion or a temple for the lotus and with Kannada legends

### SECTION XVIII THE YADAVAS OF DEVAGIRI

The Yadavas of Devagiri, claiming descent from the epic hero Krishna, are also called Sevunas because they ruled over the Sevuna or Seuna country—the region from Nasik to

**Bhillama** Devagiri Bhillama (1187—1191), who had been a feudatory of Somesvara IV, took advantage of the decline of the Chalukyas of Kalyani, seized the territory as far as the Krishna, founded Devagiri (Daulatabad, the Nizam's State), and made it his capital in 1187. His further territorial ambition was checked by Ballala II Hoysala, who defeated him near Gadag (Dharwar District, Bombay) in 1191, captured Lakkundi (Dharwar District), which had been ably defended by Jaitrapala Yadava, and pursued his enemy to the banks of the Krishna. Bhillama lost his life in this campaign.

**Jaitugi** His son and successor Jaitrapala or Jaitugi (1191—1210), conquered the Kalachuris of Tripuri about 1196 and Mahadeva Kakatiya in 1199. He is said to have released Ganapati Kakatiya from prison and enthroned him at Warangal (the Nizam's State), the capital of

\* Smith *The Early History of India*, p. 450

† E. P. Rice *A History of Kanarese Literature* (1921), Chapters IV and V.

the Kakatiyas. He was proficient in the *Vedas* and the *Tarā* and *Mīmamsa Sāstras*, and his Pandit in Chief was Lakshmidhara, the son of the mathematician and astronomer Bhaskaracharya. The Yādava dynasty became very powerful in the thirteenth century, and came to an end in the following century, and its history will be continued in Volume II.

## SECTION XIX THE EASTERN CHALUKYAS OF VENGI (Contd.)

**Civil War** After the death of Bhūma I, his son Vijaya-ditya IV ruled for six months, and was succeeded by the latter's son Amma I (918—925), whose death was followed by a civil war and Rashtrakuta interference. Bhūma II (934—945), the brother of Amma I, deserted the army of Govinda IV Rashtrakuta and occupied the throne. Krishna III Rashtrakuta deprived Amma II (945—970) of Vengi, forced him to retire to Kalinga, and put his own nominee, Badapa, on the Eastern Chalukya throne about 956. Danarnava (970—973), the brother and successor of Amma II, was ejected by the Vengi ruler, Badapa, descended from Yuddhamalla I, the fourth son of Vishnuvardhana V. Badapa and his successors, Tala II and Yuddhamalla II, held Vengi from 956 to 999. Yuddhamalla III was probably overthrown by Rajaraja I Chola, who established his authority at Vengi in 999 and revived the elder branch of the Eastern Chalukyas put an end to by the junior branch represented by Badapa. Saktivarma I (999—1011) thus restored his line with Chola support. He was succeeded by

**Chola Inter-ference** Vimaladitya (1011—1018), who married Kundava, the daughter of Rajaraja I Chola, the result of this union being Rajaraja I (Eastern Chalukya). Rajaraja I (1018—1060) was deprived of a part of his kingdom by his half brother Vijayaditya VII about 1030. Saktivarma I and Rajaraja I issued flat gold coins with the figure of the boar. Nanniyabhatta, the first of the Telugu *Kaviraya* and translator of a part of the *Mahabharata* into Telugu (the translation being an improvement on the Sanskrit original in several ways), as well as his contemporary Narayanabhatta, was patronised by Rajaraja I. He married Ammagadevi, the daughter of Rajendra I.

Chola and by her had a son Rajendira (Kulottunga I Chola), who united the Eastern Chalukya and Chola dynasties. After the death of Rajaraja I the Vengi throne was seized by Vijayaditya VII who abdicated in favour of his son Saktivarman II (1061—1062) after whose premature death his father occupied the throne again (1062—1076). Kulottunga I Chalukya Chola who came to the Chola throne in 1070 put an end to his uncle Vijayaditya VII's rule at Vengi in 1076 or probably sent his own son as Viceroy of Vengi after his

own uncle's death. The Eastern Chalukyas thus ruled for more than 500 years. A feature of their administrative system is the confiscation of

the whole cargo of ships thrown on the shore by storms and this practice was given up by the Kakatiya Ganapati as announced in his Motupalli (Guntur District) Pillar *abhayasasana*

(edict guaranteeing protection) of 1244—5. Besides the Vedic religion Saivism and Vaishnavism Jainism flourished in the Vengi country and was patronised by the kings one of whom Vimala Chitya was a Jain. The existence of Buddhism in certain localities especially Amaravati is indicated by inscriptions.

Rajaraja I patronised the Telugu translation of the *Mahabharata*. The inscriptions of the Eastern Chalukyas show that they encouraged Sanskrit from the beginning and Telugu from the time of Yuddhamalla III—tenth century. Mallanna lived in the second half of the eleventh century and rendered into Telugu verse an important mathematical work in Sanskrit by the Jain author Mahaviracharya. The grant of Virra Choda the son of Kulottunga I makes provision for a Vedic College.

## SECTION XX THE KAKATIYAS OF WARANGAL

Beta the first historical member of the Kakatiya dynasty was feudatory to Vikramaditya VI of Kalyani.

Prola II took advantage of the decline of the Western Chalukyas and the disorder in the Vengi province after the death of Kulottunga I and carved out a principality between the Krishna and the Godavari with its capital at Anumakonda. He is said to have defeated captured



the 24 Jain *Tirthankaras* or saints—erected at Sravana Belgola (Mysore) a *basti* (Jain temple) named after himself about 982 and a statue of Gomatesvara about 983 'larger than any of the statues of Rameses in Egypt which in daring conception and gigantic dimensions (56<sup>1</sup> feet in height) is without a rival in India and thus truly earned the title of Raja. After Rajamalla IV came his younger brother Rakkasa Ganga (985—1024) in 1004 Tala

**Chola Conquest** had was captured by the Cholas and his power came to an end though his inscription of 1024 mentions Rajendra I Chola as his overlord

Ganga princes however continued to exist. Ganga Raja was the minister of Vishnuvardhana Hoysala in the twelfth century and Ganga Raja of Sivasamudrum defied Krishna deva Raya of Vijayanagar early in the sixteenth century. All

**Religion and Literature** the Gangas from the seventh century were unwaveringly devoted to Jainism and gave their substantial patronage to it. In the tenth century lived the great Kannada men of letters Pampa, the author of the *Pampa Bharata*, Ponna and Ranna the greatest of the Kannada poets.

## SECTION XXII THE HOYSALAS OF DVARASAMUDRA

The traditional founder of the Hoysala dynasty was Sala and the first historical person Vinayaditya I (1006—1022) was followed by Nripalama (1022—1047) Vinayaditya II (1047—1100) was a feudatory of the Chalukyas of Kalyani. These chiefs belonged to Sasakapura (Sosevur, Kadur District, Mysore) and became influential during the wars between the Cholas and the Chalukyas in Mysore. Ballala I (1100—1106) changed his capital to Belur (Hassan District, Mysore) and beat off an attack on Dvarasamudra (Halebid near Belur). He was followed by his brother Bittideva (Vishnuvardhana after his

**Vishnu vardhana** conversion to Vaishnavism by Ramanuja) the founder of the Hoysala power (c 1111—1141) whose date of accession is not definitely known.

With the help of his general Ganga Raja he seized Ganga vadi from the Cholas about 1117 and assumed the title of *Talakadugonda* (captor of Talakad). He made an incomplete conquest of Nolambavadi and is said to have

invaded the Tamil country and reached Ramesvaram. Some of his gold coins contain the legend *Sri Talakadugonda* in Kannada, and the Hoysala crest is a maned lion. By 1127 he had become master of the whole of the Mysore State with his capital at Dvarasamudra. In spite of his practically independent position, he nominally continued as a feudatory of the Western Chalukyas. Though he became a Vaishnava, his attitude towards his original faith Jainism was benevolent. Saivism also was patronised by him. His general, Ganga Raja, a Jain, favoured his religion. Many temples are assigned to his reign including those at Belur. Under his son Narasimha I (1141—1173), a boy of eight at his accession, Banavasi and Nolambavadi were administered by Chalukya Viceroys, though his father's possession of them had been recognised by his overlord. But after the usurpation of Bijjala, Bokana the general of Narasimha, triumphed over the usurper, and Hoysala influence was exercised over those two provinces. The king a young man lived the life of a sensualist. Ballala II (1173—1220) won his greatest victory over Bhallama of Devagiri in 1191 and extended his dominions up to the Krishna. As by this time Somesvara IV of Kalyani had practically ceased to function as overlord and as the Yadavas of Devagiri had become independent, Ballala II assumed imperial titles in 1191/2 and founded an era commencing from that date. Thus the Hoysalas emerged as an independent and important power in the twelfth century and played a conspicuous part in South Indian history till the foundation of Vijayanagar in the fourteenth century.

Nagachandra or Ablunava Pampa distinct from Adi Pampa, patronised by Vishnuvardhana, gives the Jain version of the epic story in his *Ramayana* called after him. Kannada Literature Kanti, the nun, was a poetess. Rajaditva versified the rules of Mathematics. Najasena (1112) the moralist protested against the unnecessary use of Sanskrit terms characteristic of his contemporaries. All these authors were Jains. Harisvara and Raghavanka were Virasaivas, authors of the *Gerijakalyana* and *Harischandra kavya* respectively, (1165). Venkatasagara a Jain, wrote the first

Kannada novel *Lilavati* (1170), in imitation of Subandhu's *Vasavadatta*

### SECTION XXIII THE CHOLAS OF TANJORE AND GANGAIKONDACHOLAPURAM

**The Cholas of Uraiyur** The vicissitudes of the Cholas of the Sangam Age are unknown during the period of Kalabhira usurpation and of Pallava ascendancy except for stray references in literature and inscriptions. Their existence throughout these six centuries vouches for the continuance of their family, though their dynastic power had disappeared. They were reduced to the position of petty chiefs in the Uraiyur region though a branch in the Cuddapah and Kurnool Districts became sufficiently important to attract the attention of Hiuen T'ang in the seventh century. The epigraphical notices of the conquest of the Cholas by the Pallavas, the Pandyas and the Chalukyas of Bahliki, are to be taken as references to the Chola country. Besides marrying their princesses to the members of the dominant dynasties and taking part in the wars of the period as subordinates and allies of the imperial dynasts, they promoted in some measure the fortunes of the growing orthodox sects Saivism and Vaishnavism.

**Vijayalaya and Aditya I** The conquest of Tanjore by Vijayalaya (c 850—c 871) a chieftain in the vicinity of Uraiyur, from the Muttarayars feudatory to the Pandyas, provoked a Pandya-Pallava conflict ending about 880 in the battle of Sripurambiyam (near Kumbhakonam), in which Aditya I (871—907), the son and successor of Vijayalaya, fought on the victorious side and obtained from Aparajita Pallava additions to his territory near Tanjore. About 893 Aditya the over-mighty feudatory, defeated his overlord and seized the Kanchi region. He seems to have conquered the Coimbatore and Salem Districts as well from the Pandyas, perhaps with the aid of the Chera king Sthanu Ravi, with whom he was on terms of intimacy. Thus he became master of the territory from Kalahasti to Pudukkottai and Coimbatore, and reaped the fruit of the battle of Sripurambiyam, which witnessed the expiry of the Pandya imperial power and the spasmodic energy of the moribund Pallava authority. *Lal*

his father Vijayaditya I who built a temple to Durgā at Tanjore after its conquest by him Aditya, a staunch Saiva, honoured Siva in the same way.

**Parantaka I** Parantaka (907—953), the son of Aditya I gave attention to the Pandya country from the beginning of his reign. His raid on Malura led to his assumption of the title of Madurai-konda in his third regnal year. About 915 a battle was fought at Vellur, and the Pandyas and the Sinhalese were beaten. A third campaign effected the expulsion of Rajasimha II Pandya about 920 and three years later, Parantaka described himself as Maduraim Namumkondar (captor of Madura and Ceylon) but he failed subsequently to get from the Sinhalese ruler the insignia of Pandya royalty left with him by Rajasimha. Further he obliterated the remains of Pallava power and conquered the country as far north as Nellore. The Western Ganga Pithurupati II was subordinate to him. Thus his empire extended from the North Pennar to Cape Comorin. But the last decade of his reign witnessed the invasion of the Kanchi region by Krishna III Rashtrakuta with the aid of Butuga II Western Ganga. The Chola failure at Takkolam in 949 resulted not only in the death of the crown prince but also in the ruin of the nascent imperialism of Parantaka I. The Chola empire was no more; it had to be built up all over again. One curious result of Rajaditya's death at Takkolam was that his guru Chaturanana Pandita, a noble and scholar of Kerala, became an ascetic on the ground that life had become stale and unprofitable to him after his disciple's decease. Though Parantaka's reign ended in a tragedy, nothing could wipe away the glory of the elaborate system of village administration by the *sabha* and its committees described in his Uttaramerur (Chingleput District) inscriptions of 919 and 921. Like his father he was active in building temples. He provided the Nataraja shrine at Chidambaram with a gold roof.

### Interval between Parantaka I and Rajaraja I

The interval between the death of Parantaka I in 953 and the accession of Rajaraja I in 985 is a confused period. The

Chola genealogy and chronology during that interval are largely uncertain, and its history is not sufficiently clear. Parantaka was succeeded by his second son Gandaraditya, Rājaditya his eldest son having perished at Takkolam. Gandaraditya's queen, Sembian Mahadevi, was of a pious and charitable disposition, esteemed by all the members of the royal family including Rajaraja I. Parantaka II (Sundara Chola) was the son of Arinjaya, the son of Parantaka I by a Kerala princess. During his reign (956—973), the Kanchi region was recovered from the Rashtrakutas, though the campaigns against the Pandyas were indecisive. His son Aditya II was murdered about 969, probably at the instance of Uttama Chola, the son of Gandaraditya and Sembian Mahadevi—a bad son of excellent parents like Sambaji, the son of Sivaji and Sai Bai. Parantaka II was followed by Uttama Chola (973—985), whose gold coin is the earliest known Chola piece.

**Rajaraja the Great** Rajaraja I (985—1014) was the son of Parantaka II and Vanavan Mahadevi, and brother of Aditya II. His first great achievement was the destruction of the Chera navy at Kandalur Salai (Kandalur=a part of Trivandrum Travancore, Salai=roadstead). The expression "Kandalur salai kalamaruttaruli" has been interpreted by some scholars in the sense of "pleased to break the plates in the feeding house at Kandalur," or "pleased to discontinue the feeding at Kandalur," but this rendering is generally rejected. Rajaraja's southern campaign was directed not only against Bhaskara Ravivarman (978—1036) but also against the Pandyas and the Sinhalese. He re-established Chola authority in the Pandya country and annexed Northern Ceylon, building there a stone temple to Siva. His expedition to Malainadu or Coorg is said to have been intended to check the power of the Pandyas and the Cheras. The conquest of Gangavadi and other parts of Mysore must have been effected between 991 and 1004. The attack on Satyasraya of Kalyani was of a very destructive character, and resulted in the Tungabhadra becoming the boundary of the Chola Empire. Rajaraja interfered in the affairs of the Chalukyas of Vengi, put an end to their dynastic quarrels.

and gave his daughter Kundava in marriage to Vimaladitya. His last achievement was the conquest of the Maldive Islands. Thus his navy must have operated on three occasions: the destruction of the Chera fleet and the conquest of Ceylon and of the Maldive Islands.

In 1012 Rajaraja made his son Rajendira heir apparent, and the latter's regnal years were counted from that date. Hence the overlapping dates of Chola dynastic history given below, indicative of joint rule. Rajaraja assumed a number of titles the chief of them being *Mummadi Chola*, *Jayangonda* and *Sivapadasekhara*. Though devoted to Shiva he patronised Vaishnavism and co-operated in the construction of a Buddhist monastery at Negapatam by a Sailendra King of Sumatra. The great Rajarajesvara temple at Tanjore—the most beautiful specimen of Tamil architecture at its best—was completed by him in 1010 four years before his death. The accurate survey and assessment of the country for purposes of land revenue (a great survey commenced in 1001), the perfection of the administrative organisation of the country by the creation of a strong and centralised machinery corresponding to the staff of secretaries in a modern administration, and the posting of representative officers of the central government in suitable localities, the promotion of a system of audit and control by which village assemblies and other quasi-public corporations were held to account without their initiative or autonomy being curtailed, the creation of a powerful standing army and a considerable navy which achieved even greater success under Rajendra than under himself, mark out Rajaraja as the greatest among the empire-builders of Southern India.\* He was not only a king of remarkable military and administrative ability but also a pious and tolerant man who patronised art and literature, and a lovable personality. His great and solid work was the rock upon which his son built and achieved unique success. He started the practice of prefixing 'historical introductions' to his inscriptions, and was imitated by his successors. These official summaries of public events are of great value to the Chola historian.

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\* Nilakanta Sastri, *op. cit.* I, p. 223

**Rajendra I** Rajendra I (1012—1044) had taken a prominent part in the campaigns of his father, especially in the attack on Satvasiaya of Kalyani. In 1018 he redeemed his father's failure by his own seizure of the Pandya crown and other royal belongings in the custody of the Sinhalese ruler, whose country was conquered and governed by Rajendra. In the same year he secured the crown of the Chera ruler as well. In 1018-9 he appointed his son as Viceroy of Madura, and Kerala was subsequently added to his charge. Though Javasimha II of Kalyani was defeated in 1021 at Musangi (Maski), he soon recovered the Raichur Doab, re-established his authority up to the Tungabhadra and even penetrated into the Bellary region.

**Early Military Efforts** The next military effort of Rajendra was the Chola expedition to Northern India which was led by him up to the Godavari and by his general beyond that river. In spite of difficulties in identifying the place and personal names mentioned in the inscriptions concerned and notwithstanding some overstatements and possible omissions, the main outlines of Rajendra's military demonstration beyond the Mahanadi are historical. Crossing the Godavari and passing through Bastar and Orissa, the Chola army reached Western Bengal, defeated two kings, crossed the Ganges, overthrew another ruler, re-crossed that river, and returned home after triumphing over Mahipala I. It is no longer tenable to regard the expedition to the Ganges as a pious tour or as a campaign against Gangavadi (Mysore). Some think that the northern raid of Rajendra was not without some permanent effects, the settlement of some South Indians in Bengal and Mithila, leading to the foundation of the Sena principality of Bengal and the Karnata dynasty of Mithila, and the establishment of Northern Indian Sivas in the Tamil country.

The most famous venture of Rajendra was the naval expedition to Kadaram and Sri Bhoja or Sri Vijaya about 1025. Sri Vijaya was a kingdom in Sumatra, some locate Kadaram in the same island, while others identify it with Keddah, near Penang, on the West Coast of the Malay peninsula. It is difficult to guess the real object of the expedition

**The Kadaram Adventure**

as Sangiama Vijayottunga Varman conquered by Rajendra was the successor of the Sailendra Emperor Mara Vijayottunga Varman who had founded a Buddhist monastery at Nega patam during the 21st regnal year (1006) of Rajaraja I. Rajaraja had granted a village to the Buddha of that monastery and after his death Rajendra had renewed the grant. Therefore it is not easy to say how, within a decade between Rajaraja's death in 1014 and Rajendra's expedition about 1025 the friendship between the two imperial powers had changed into enmity. Whatever may be the cause of the Chola naval move its effects could only have been temporary, and there is no reason for thinking that the conquests in Sumatra and Malaya were administered by the Cholas.

After the Kadaram expedition Ceylon started a war of independence about 1029. There were rebellions in the Pandya and Kerala countries which were put down by Rajendra's son Rajadhiraja I. A Chola invasion of the Western Chalukya Empire under Somesvara I was undertaken in the last years of Rajendra and Rajadhiraja I is said to have sacked Kalyani and brought home the *diarapalaka* (door keeper) image which now exists at Darasuram (Tanjore District). This invasion is said to have caused much injury and humiliation to the vanquished Chalukyas. Minor campaigns were carried on in some parts of Mysore and it is stated that *cows were carried off and women's girdles were unloosed*. We have referred to other instances to show that the Cholas seriously offended against the ethics of warfare even in the days of Rajaraja I and Rajendra I.

When Rajendra I died in 1044 the extent of the empire was at its widest and its military and naval prestige stood at its highest. \* His most famous titles are *Mudikonda Gangai kon la Kadarangonda* and *Pandita*. The first title signifies that he captured the crowns of the Pandya, Kerala and Ceylon kings. He built a new capital named it *Gangaikondacholapuram* (Udayarpalayam Taluk, Trichinopoly District) and near it excavated a

Administra-  
tion



large irrigation tank called *Cholagangam* whose bed is now a jungle His title of *Pandita Chola* is apparently justified by his provision for a Vedic College recorded in an inscription from Ennaynam (South Arcot District) which is an important document for the study of educational organisation under the Cholas and the policy of Rajendra in this respect was continued by his successors His three sons Rajadhiraja I Rajendra II and Virarajendra I ascended the throne in succession after his death in 1044 His daughter Ammangadevi was the queen of Rajaraja I of Vengi and mother of Kulottunga I Chalukya Chola The titles *Parakesari* and *Rajakesari*, were assumed alternately by Chola sovereigns from Vijaya I and Rajendra I was a *Parakesari* his father being a *Rajakesari*

### Interval between Rajendra I and Kulottunga I

Rajadhiraja I (1018—1052) was made joint ruler with his father early in the latter's reign During his independent reign from 1044 to 1052 the Ceylonese troubles continued and drastic measures were adopted to remove them including barbarities like the mutilation of the nose of the Sinhalese Queen Mother in most parts of the island Chola power was maintained intact The war with the Western Chalukyas culminated in a severe engagement at Koppam in 1052 which went against Somesvara I though the Chola Emperor lost his life in it in 1054 according to Prof Nilakanta Sastri \* In spite of the frequent defeats of the Chalukyas of Kalyani and the serious injury done to some parts of their dominions the Cholas failed to reduce them to vassalage or annex permanently any portion of their territory Rajadhiraja's was a continuously martial career for over thirty years He is referred to in the records of his successors as the king who died on the elephant back He performed a horse-sacrifice about 1044 He was succeeded by Rajendra II (1052—1064) who crowned himself on the battlefield of Koppam where he had distinguished himself by his bravery and is said to have marched to

\* op cit I pp 293 and 314

Kollapur to erect a pillar of victory there. In 1062 Somesvara I was defeated at Kudal-Sangamam (junction of the Krishna and the Tungabhadra) the object of the Chola invasion being to check the growth of his power after the battle of Koppam and prevent his interference in the Eastern Chalukya affairs. Rajendra II was followed by his younger brother, Virarajendra I (1063—1070) who invaded the Western Chalukya Empire in 1067 in response to the alleged challenge of Somesvara I to meet him at Kudal-Sangamam once more. But the latter did not turn up, and the Chola army returned after erecting a pillar of victory on the banks of the Tungabhadra and offering insults to an effigy of Somesvara but he was probably suffering from an illness which subsequently persuaded him to put an end to his own life. Chola inscriptions state that Virarajendra saw the back of (defeated) Somesvara five times. The Chola Emperor proceeded to Vengi, defeated the Western Chalukyas near Bezvada, strengthened his hold on Vengi and returned to Gangavondicholapuram, the capital from the days of Rajendra I. He despatched an expedition to Ceylon and crushed the rebellion there. He is said to have helped a king to recover Kadaram about 1068. He came into conflict with Somesvara II and both sides claim the victory. It seems that Somesvara II and his brother Vikramaditya VI quarrelled and on the latter's appeal to the Chola Emperor, the former was forced to surrender a part of his dominions to his brother who is said to have married a Chola princess. Virarajendra assumed a number of titles like *Aharaimallakulakala* (destroyer of the family of Ahavamalla) and *Pallabharallabha* indicative of his triumph over the Chalukyas of Kalyani. He performed many charities and presented God Nataraja of Chidambaram with a ruby. He built a palace and a temple at his capital. He was succeeded by Adhirajendra who ruled from 1070 to 1076.

**Adhirajendra** with his father Virarajendra I and only for a few months as sole monarch. He is regarded as the *Krimikantla* (diseased neck) Chola of Vaishnava tradition the persecutor of Ramanuja though some scholars would assign that notorious role to Virarajendra I or Kulottunga I. The collapse of Chola authority under Adhirajendra his unnatural death and the accession of Kulottunga I resulted in.

the extinction of the Vijayalaya line of Cholas. Kulottunga's advent to the Chola throne cannot be satisfactorily accounted for with the conflicting evidences available.

**Kulottunga I.** Rajendra Eastern Chalukya or Kulottunga Chola I (1070—1120) was the great grandson of Rajaraja I

Chola in two ways, his mother, Ammangadevi, was the daughter of Rajendra I Chola (son of Rajaraja I Chola) and his father Rajaraja I Eastern Chalukya, was the son of Kundava (daughter of Rajaraja I Chola) and Vimaladitya

Eastern Chalukya. Thus he was a 75 per cent Chola by blood. The career of this hyphenated Chola from the death of his father in 1060 to his occupation of the Chola throne in 1070 is obscure. It is likely that he was on good terms with Virarajendra I and helped him in the re-establishment of his authority in the kingdom of Vengi in 1067 against the encroachment of the Western Chalukyas. It is probable that his accession to the Chola throne was regarded with satisfaction, seeing that the confusion of the previous reign had necessitated the rehabilitation of the integrity and strength of the empire. About 1073

Yasah Karna Kalichuri raided the Vengi country. About 1075

Ceylon became independent. Kulottunga came into conflict with Vikramaditya VI of Kalyani about 1076 with results differently estimated by

the Chola and Chalukya authorities. After the death or ejection of Vijayaditya VII Eastern Chalukya in 1076 Kulottunga appointed his son as Viceroy of Vengi. In 1088 peace was concluded with

Ceylon and cemented with a marriage alliance. The Pandyas and the Cheras were reconquered, and military colonies were established in their countries to keep them under control but in matters of internal administration they were left to themselves. In 1090 an em-

bossy came from Sumatra in connection with the Buddhist monastery at Negapatam. Kulottunga's first Kalinga campaign about 1096 quelled the revolt of South Kalinga, a part of the Vengi province.

About 1098 a revolt in the far south was suppressed by a

famous general Naralokavira The second and, more important expedition to Kalinga in 1110 is dealt with in the *Kalingattupparani* of Jayangondar the court poet of Kulottunga. It was led by Karunakara Tondaiman, who defeated Anantavarman Chodaganga the king of Northern Kalinga and son of Rajasundari the daughter of Kulottunga. We do not know why Kulottunga warred with his grandson. Anyhow the campaign did not lead to any annexation. His inscription of 1111 indicates his friendly relations with the Gahada

valas of Benares and Kanauj. About 1117 he lost Gangavadi to Vishnuvardhana Hoysala (1111—1141) who captured Talakad assumed the title of Talakadugonda\* and is said to have invaded the Tamil country and raided it as far as Ramesvaram. Some support is given to this claim by an inscription which refers to the failure of his attempt to carry away some images from Aduturai (Trichinopoly District).†

About 1118 the Vengi province came under the control of Vikramaditya VI of Kalyani, whose policy aiming at the separation of the Cholas and the Eastern Chalukya<sup>9</sup> was and pursued from the beginning of his career was successful in the last decade of his reign. Thus Kulottunga I lost

Ceylon, Gangavadi and Vengi. Though his empire was reduced in extent he gave a fresh lease of life to it, and ensured for his subjects a century of peace and good government. † Though Gangakondacholapuram continued to be the capital, Kanchi rose in importance. He assumed the title of *Sungandavarman* (who abolished tolls) Chola but the character of this fiscal reform is not known. He ordered a revenue survey in his sixteenth regnal year (1086), by a strange coincidence the date of the Domesday survey of England. Another survey was made in 1110.

**Interval between Kulottungas I and III** Kulottunga I had a large family, seven sons and two daughters by Madhurantakialone Chodaganga, Mummadi Chola, Viraj Chola and Vikrama Chola, who had been Viceroys of Vengi under their

\* Nilakanta Sastri op cit II (1937) p 44

† Ibid p 2.

father, three other sons, and Rajasundari (mother of Ananta varman Chodaganga) and Suryavalli (who married a Sinhalese prince) He was succeeded by Vikrama Chola (1118-1135)

**Vikrama Chola** who became sole ruler in 1120 He seized the opportunity of the death of Vikramaditya VI of Kalyani in 1127 to restore Chola power in the

Vengi kingdom He recovered a bit of Gangavadi About 1125 North and South Arcot Districts suffered from floods and famine The year 1128 is memorable for the king's donations to the Nataraja temple at Chidambaram which had been favoured by the Cholas from Parantaka I and which had become particularly important owing to the shifting of the capital to Gangaikondacholapuram, not far from Chidambaram A record of 1130 says that the king was living in his palace at Chidambaram His surnames *Tyagasamudra* and *Akalanka* indicate his charities and piety Kulottunga II (1133-1150) became independent ruler after his father's death in 1135 continued his predecessor's benefactions

to the Chidambaram temple, and exhibited religious intolerance by throwing the image of Govindaraja into the sea, though the antiquity of his shrine is proved by Manikkavasagar's reference to it He is regarded by some as the *Krimikantha* Chola of Vaishnava Literature His reign is important in Tamil literary history as he and his feudatories patronised Ottak

**Rajaraja II** kuttan, Sekkilar and Kamban Under his son, Rajaraja II (1146-1173), a civil war broke out about 1169 between Parakrama and Kulasekhara Pandyas

**The Pandya Civil War** and the latter seized Madurai and killed his opponent along with some members of his family The help sought for by Parakrama

Pandya from Parakramabahu I of Ceylon (1153-1186) came too late, and the Sinhalese general, Lankapura conducted a destructive campaign in the Pandya country which necessitated Chola intervention on behalf of Kulasekhara Pandya, won a victory over Kulasekhara and put Vira Pandya the son of Parakrama Pandya, in possession of the country But soon Kulasekhara was restored to the throne by the Cholas, who invaded Ceylon Parakramabahu suddenly changed his policy and allied himself with Kulasekhara who in consequence attacked some Chola allies The Chola policy also was

reversed, and Vira Pandya was enthroned. This protracted warfare continued beyond the reign of Rajaraja II till about 1177. Thus a century after the accession of Kulottunga, the growth of feudatory puissance reached its culmination and revealed the central weakness of the Chola Empire. Rajadhiraja II (1163—1179) the successor of Rajaraja II and another grandson of Vikrama Chola brought the Pandya civil war to a close.

**Kulottunga III** The relationship of Kulottunga III (1178—1216) to Rajadhiraja II is not known though the latter chose him as his successor some time before his death.

**Pandya Affairs** Though Vira Pandya gained the throne with the help of Rajadhiraja II he coquetted with Ceylon and turned against the Cholas. Kulottunga probably about 1182 dethroned him and put Vikrama Pandya perhaps related to Kulasekhara Pandya on the throne. In 1189 Vira Pandya created troubles with the support of the Kerala King and was vanquished by Kulottunga who claims a victory over Ceylon as well while the Sinhalese ruler Nissankamalla is said to have thrice invaded the Pandya country. Between 1190 and 1194 Kulottunga seems to have asserted

**The Telugu Chodas** his authority in the Kongu country. His relations with the Telugu Chodas (chieftains claiming descent from Karikala Chola) his feudatories who occupied the territory between North Arcot and Nellore Districts were generally good, but about 1196 he recovered Kanchi from them after their possession of it for some time. About 1200 an expedition was sent against Jata

**The Pandya Trouble Again** varman Kulasekhara probably the son of Vikrama Pandya and the first of a series of great Pandyas who established an empire in the thirteenth century and though he was defeated he was reinstated but Kulottunga ravaged the Pandya country and destroyed the Coronation Hall at Madurai. His expedition to the Telugu country about 1208 is said to have been successful. But his reign seems to have ended with his defeat by the Pandyas under Maravarman Sundara whose victory could not however be exploited owing to Hoysala intervention on behalf of the Cholas. Gangaikondacholapuram

remained the capital of the empire and Kulottunga gave much attention to the building and improvement of temples. Famine conditions prevailed in 1201 and 1202, and relief works were started by private agency as recorded in an inscription at Tiruvannamalai (North Arcot District). Though Kulottunga maintained his empire and its administration intact till the Pandya invasion of the Chola country towards the close of his reign, his difficulties bring into relief the dangers that threatened the imperial position. His personal qualities were responsible for the continuance of the empire under him, and he may be regarded as the last great Chola. The growth of feudatory power impaired the strength of the central authority and would work havoc under weak kings. The rise of Pandya imperialism in the thirteenth century ruined the Chola Empire during the reign of Rajaraja III (1216—1246), the incompetent successor of Kulottunga III. Under the next ruler Rajendra III (1246—1279) the Chola power was superseded by that of the Pandyas. The vicissitudes of the Chola fortunes after the death of Kulottunga III in 1236 belong to our next Volume.

**Chola Administration** The extent and resources of the Chola Empire increased the power and prestige of monarchy, which loomed large in the public esteem. The pomp of kingship was augmented not only by the great capitals, large courts and magnificent donations in lieu of the *asvamedha* and other sacrifices of old, but also by the giving of royal names to idols and the installation and worship of the images of kings and queens in temples. The system of hereditary succession to the throne was slightly modified by the ruling king's occasional choice as heir apparent of the younger prince in preference to his seniors. The absolutism of deified monarchy was tempered by an organised administrative staff, the chief members of which in close contact with the king were consulted by him, owing to the apparent absence of a regular ministerial council. Royal tours contributed to the efficiency of the administration. The officers were paid by land assignments. Public revenue was derived mainly from land and collected in kind, or in cash or in both by the

**The Last Great Chola**

**Central Government**

**Revenue System**

village assemblies. The states demand of land revenue seems to have been one-third of the gross produce in the time of Rajaraja I. This proportion was fixed after an elaborate land survey and we have mentioned the surveys under Rajaraja I and Kulottunga I. There were periodical revisions of the classification of land, and of the assessment of land revenue. The other items of public income were customs and tolls, various kinds of profession tax mines, forests, salt pans, etc. The innumerable taxes, though uneconomical, were intended to supplement the land revenue with its fluctuations due to partial remissions in hard times. Unpaid labour was frequently employed. Though there is evidence of the sympathetic administration of the tax system—Kulottunga I became famous by abolishing tolls—, some cases of oppression are on record. Further, the rise into power of the feudatories must have tended to increase the tax burdens of the people. Failure to pay the land revenue involved the sale of the land in question, not excluding temple lands. The chief items of public expenditure were the king and his court, army and navy, civil administrative staff, roads, and irrigation tanks and channels.

**Army and Navy** The army consisted of elephants, cavalry and infantry, and as many as about seventy regiments are mentioned in inscriptions, possessing a corporate organisation and even participating in civic life and making grants to temples. Attention was given to their training and discipline, and cantonments existed. The terrible character of Chola warfare has been alluded to in connection with the invasions of the Western Chalukya and Pandya countries. Much injury was done to the civil population and women were dishonoured. Mutilations like nose-slitting are on record. When we speak of the glories of temples and luxuries of kings and chieftains, we cannot forget the sufferings inflicted on the neighbouring kingdoms and the enormous spoils of war. The naval achievement of the Tamils reached its climax under the Cholas. Not only were the Coromandel and Malabar Coasts controlled by them but the Bay of Bengal became a Chola lake for some decades. In the absence of extant nautical literature of the Tamils, we can have no idea of the technique of their naval warfare and other related lines of advance.



**Village Autonomy** The empire of Rajaraja I was divided into about eight *mandalams* or provinces and the latter into *valanadus* and *nadus*. The next administrative subdivisions were *kuriams* or *kottams* each consisting of a number of autonomous villages playing a conspicuous part in administration. We have seen that princes were in charge of the Vengi and Madura provinces. We have also observed that the system of village autonomy with *sabhas* and their committees existed in an embryonic stage under the Pallavas and the Pandyas in the eighth and ninth centuries and that the Chola inscriptions of the tenth century reveal its full development. Though there was corporate activity in economic and religious life and in territorial divisions like *nadus* and *nagarams* (towns) the greatest and most comprehensive group activity was exhibited by village assemblies. Of the two kinds of assemblies called the *ur* and *sabha* which were gatherings of the adult members of the local community, the first was of the general type and the second was the assembly of the *agrahara* or Brahman settlement and it is the latter type that looms large in Chola inscriptions.

Two Uttaramerur (Chingleput District) epigraphs record the resolutions passed by its Mahasabha in the 12th and 14th regnal years (919 and 921) of Parantaka I relating to the constitution of executive committees the second resolution improving on and superseding the first. According to the regulations of 921 each of the thirty wards of the village was to nominate for selection persons possessing the following qualifications—Ownership of more than one

<p><b>Qualifications for Membership</b></p>	<p>fourth <i>veli</i> (about an acre and a half) of land residence in a house built on one's own site aged above 35 and below 70, and knowledge of the Vedic <i>mantras</i> and the <i>Brahmanas</i> in the alternative one-eighth <i>veli</i> of land and one <i>Veda</i> and a <i>Bhaskya</i>. Though possessing these qualifications the following were to be excluded—those who had been on any of the committees for the past three years—those who had been on the committee but had failed to submit the accounts and all their specified relations—those who had committed incest or other great sins and their</p>
<p><b>Disqualifications</b></p>	

village assemblies. The state's demand of land revenue seems to have been one third of the gross produce in the time of Rajaraja I. This proportion was fixed after an elaborate land survey and we have mentioned the surveys under Rajaraja I and Kulottunga I. There were periodical revisions of the classification of land and of the assessment of land revenue. The other items of public income were customs and tolls, various kinds of profession tax mines forests salt pans etc. The innumerable taxes though uneconomical, were intended to supplement the land revenue with its fluctuations due to partial remissions in hard times. Unpaid labour was frequently employed. Though there is evidence of the sympathetic administration of the tax system—Kulottunga I became famous by abolishing tolls—, some cases of oppression are on record. Further, the rise into power of the feudatories must have tended to increase the tax burdens of the people. Failure to pay the land revenue involved the sale of the land in question, not excluding temple lands. The chief items of public expenditure were the king and his court, army and navy, civil administrative staff, roads, and irrigation tanks and channels.

**Army and Navy** The army consisted of elephants, cavalry and infantry and as many as about seventy regiments are mentioned in inscriptions possessing a corporate organisation and even participating in civic life and making grants to temples. Attention was given to their training and discipline, and cantonments existed. The terrible character of Chola warfare has been alluded to in connection with the invasions of the Western Chalukya and Pandya countries. Much injury was done to the civil population and women were dishonoured. Mutilations like nose-slitting are on record. When we speak of the glories of temples and luxuries of kings and chieftains we cannot forget the sufferings inflicted on the neighbouring kingdoms and the enormous spoils of war. The naval achievement of the Tamils reached its climax under the Cholas. Not only were the Coromandel and Malabar Coasts controlled by them but the Bay of Bengal became a Chola lake for some decades. In the absence of extant nautical literature of the Tamils we can have no idea of the technique of their naval warfare and other related lines of advance.

**Village Autonomy** The empire of Rajaraja I was divided into about eight *mandalams* or provinces and the latter into *valanadus* and *nadus*. The next administrative subdivisions were *kuriams* or *kottams* each consisting of a number of autonomous villages playing a conspicuous part in administration. We have seen that princes were in charge of the Vengi and Madura provinces. We have also observed that the system of village autonomy with *sabhas* and their committees existed in an embryonic stage under the Pallavas and the Pandyas in the eighth and ninth centuries and that the Chola inscriptions of the tenth century reveal its full development. Though there was corporate activity in economic and religious life and in territorial divisions like *nadus* and *nagarams* (towns) the greatest and most comprehensive group activity was exhibited by village assemblies. Of the two kinds of assemblies called the *ur* and *sabha* which were gatherings of the adult members of the local community, the first was of the general type and the second was the assembly of the *agrahara* or Brahman settlement and it is the latter type that looms large in Chola inscriptions.

**Constitution  
of Execu-  
tive Com-  
mittees**

Two Uttaramerur (Chingleput District) epigraphs record the resolutions passed by its Mahasabha in the 12th and 14th regnal years (919 and 921) of Parantaka I relating to the constitution of executive committees the

second resolution improving on and superseding the first. According to the regulations of 921 each of the thirty wards of the village was to nominate for selection persons possessing the following qualifications — Ownership of more than one

**Qualifica-  
tions for  
Membership**

fourth *telu* (about an acre and a half) of land residence in a house built on one's own site aged above 35 and below 70, and knowledge of the Vedic mantras and the *Brahmanas*

in the alternative, one eighth *telu* of land and one *Veda* and a *Bhashya*. Though possessing these qualifications the following were to be excluded those who had been on any of the com-

**Disqualifi-  
cations**

mittees for the past three years those who had been on the committee but had failed to submit the accounts and all their specified relations

those who had committed incest or other great sins and their

relations those who had stolen the property of others, those who had associated themselves with low caste people but had not performed expiatory ceremonies, even those who had purified themselves after eating forbidden dishes, etc. From the

**Kinds of Committees** persons duly nominated one was to be chosen for each *kudumbu* (ward) by *kudaiolai* (lot) for a year in the manner prescribed. Of the thirty so selected twelve who were advanced in age and learning and who had served on the garden and tank committees, were assigned to the *samiatsaraiariyam* (annual committee), twelve to the *tottavariyam* (garden committee), and six for the *eruvaiyam* (tank committee). Two other committees were similarly selected—the *pancharara* (?) committee and the *pon* (gold) committee consisting of six members each. A judicial committee also is mentioned in the records. The lot system worked on the following lines. Names of eligible persons

**The Lot System** nominated by the wards were written on palm leaf tickets which were put into a pot and shuffled, and a young boy was directed to take out as many tickets as there were members to be chosen. Inscriptions in other places than Uttaramerur mention additional committees for wards and fields, the *ulasina* committee, etc. The term *ulasina* has been interpreted as ascetics, it is better to take it as referring to strangers or foreigners. The number of committees and of members varied from village to village, and no payment was made for their services. The committee members were called *Variyapperumakkal*, the *Mahasabha*, *Perunguri*, and its members, *Perumakkal*. Ordinarily the Assembly met in the village temple. There are no references in inscriptions either to voting or to a quorum. General questions were discussed in the Assembly, and resolutions were passed and recorded.

**Functions of Assemblies** A characteristic feature of the Chola administration is that the central government concerned itself with external defence, the maintenance of internal peace and order, and the promotion of the general prosperity and cultural advance of the empire. It left the village assemblies largely to themselves and interfered chiefly in cases of conflict between two assemblies. Union of

villages was effected in one case without the intervention of the central government. The extent of village autonomy may be gauged from the functions of the assemblies. The Mahasabha possessed proprietary rights over communal lands and controlled the private lands within its jurisdiction. It did everything preliminary to conveyance of property which required the sanction of the central authority. It was concerned with the reclamation of forest and waste lands. It estimated the produce of culti-

**Fiscal** vated land and assessed the land revenue to be paid for it. It collected that revenue, and in cases of failure to pay, it had the power to sell the lands in question by public auction. Disputes about the land revenue were settled by it but in special cases, assemblies from the neighbouring villages were requested to co-operate with it in reaching a decision. General surveys were undertaken by the central government, but the approval of the Mahasabha was necessary for any change in the classification of land within its sphere. It had powers of taxation for village purposes and of remission of such taxation in exceptional cases. Instead of paying land revenue every year, a landowner might pay a fixed sum to the Assembly and compound all his future dues to the local and central authorities the Assembly regularly paying all such dues in perpetuity. Such arrangements were made in the case of lands set apart for charitable purposes. The committees looked after the village administration with the assistance of paid village officials who detected

**Judicial** crime and the judicial committee (*nyayattar*) of the Assembly settled disputes and pronounced on the innocence or guilt of the accused though punishment was awarded by royal officers or a special body of judges. The establishment of the guilt by a popular committee is the basis of the remark that the jury system prevailed under the Cholas. Inscriptions reveal that various forms of homicide were distinguished and capital punishment was not inflicted in all cases of manslaughter. In a case of death caused without malice, the guilty man was fined 16 cows, and a perpetual lamp was ordered to be lighted in the village temple for the accrual of religious merit to the deceased. Accidental death was differentiated from culpable homicide amounting to murder, and

the latter from murder. Even in some cases of murder, the extreme penalty of the law was not meted out. The Chola administration of justice could not be charged with severity or vindictiveness, it may rather be regarded as swayed by over-mercifulness. The Uttaramerur inscriptions discussed above emphasise the gravity of such offences as incest, adultery, theft, forgery, and "riding on an ass"—probably a kind of punishment for some serious crime. The Mahasabha per-

Ministrant med other functions like the maintenance of roads and irrigation works, including tanks (the major public works being executed by the central government as they were beyond the resources of local bodies), supervision of endowments (by the *dharmaśāstrīyam*), religious, medical, educational and eleemosynary, and provision from its own limited resources for learning, etc. In short, village life was well-organised on popular lines conducive to the progress and prosperity of the people and it was these villages exhibiting corporate activity which existed, though in a decadent condition, early in the nineteenth century, these 'little republics, the tiny states at the base', that extorted the admiration of sympathetic Anglo-Indian administrators "Between an able bureaucracy and the active local assemblies which in various ways fostered a live sense of citizenship, there was attained a high standard of administrative efficiency and purity."\*

**Social and Economic Life** Besides the continuance of the caste organisation of society and the existence of the *anuloma* caste of *Rathakaras* (architects) and the *pratiloma* caste of *Ayogaias* (weavers), the division of the industrial classes into *Valangai* (right hand) and *Idangai* (left hand) castes prevailed. According to tradition these two divisions originated in the time of Karikala Chola, and it is said that once when two sections of the people placed their differences before that monarch, they stood on his right and left sides, and hence the names. The *Idangai* caste in the time of Kulottunga III regarded its members as descended from the *agnikula* race and therefore as belonging to Northern India, its 98 sub-divisions are mentioned in an inscription

\* Nilakanta Sāstri op cit, II, p 312

In later times the two castes quarrelled so violently that there was no love lost between them. But in the Chola period there was co-operation among the various castes and sub-castes in social and religious life, in spite of their rivalries and exclusiveness, special privileges and lack of such privileges. There was no improvement in the position of women, though only a few

**Women and Slaves** cases of *sati* are on record the instance of Vanavan Mahadevi, the queen of Parantaka II, is unique in the royal family of the Cholas.

Social freedom and prestige belonged to accomplished dancing girls (*devadasis*, attached to temples) of the higher grade who became famous by their charities and public donations. Many kinds of slaves existed, and there are recorded instances of freemen becoming slaves in order to escape starvation. Land was possessed by individuals and communities. There were peasant proprietorship and other forms of land tenure.

**Agriculture** Agricultural prosperity was ensured by special attention to irrigation. The proper utilisation of the water of the Kaveri was supplemented by the construction of great tanks like the *Vairameghatataka* at Uttaramerur. The function of Mahasabhas with regard to the maintenance of tanks in good condition and the reclamation of forest and waste lands has been noted. There were occasional famines general and local, the visitation of 1152 seems to belong to the former category. The jewellers art reached perfection, and the proficiency of metal workers was largely due to the demand of temples for images and utensils. The weaving industry of

**Industry and Commerce** Kanchi became famous. The manufacture of sea salt was carried on at Cape Comorin, Markanam (South Arcot District) and other places on the coast. The *peruvalis* or trunk roads led to the Andhra

Western Chalukya and Kongu countries. There were merchant guilds of which one was a gigantic organisation of an international character. The normal rate of interest was 12<sup>1</sup> or 15 per cent but the rates ranged from 5 to 50 per cent. Promissory notes were in use. The chief gold coins were *madaṭ* or *pon* of 72 to 80 grains in weight (= *kalanju* or uncoined gold) and *lasu* (half a *madaṭ*) but in the reign of Kulottunga III and after *lasu* was a copper coin of small value. The gold, silver and copper coins conform to two

types (a) the Chola type, with the tiger, the Chera bow, the Pandya fish and the royal name, (b) the Ceylon type, with 'a rude human figure' There was brisk commercial intercourse between the Chola Empire and China, Sumatra, Java, Arabia, and other countries around the Persian Gulf. Three embassies were sent to China in 1015, 1033 and 1077. Arabian horses were imported in large numbers in order to strengthen the Chola cavalry

**Religion** The progress of Saivism and Vaishnavism in the Pallava period was accelerated under the Cholas and the Canon of both was fixed up In general, harmony prevailed in the relations of the two sects Rajaraja I was well disposed towards both, and his sister Kundava built temples to Siva and Vishnu at Dadapuram (South Arcot District) In many temples both gods were worshipped Still sectarian rancour occasionally exhibited itself as against Ramanuja, and in the time of Kulottunga II An inscription of 1160 in the Tanjore District refers to a Mahasabha's resolution prohibiting the association of Saivas with Vaishnavas and prescribing confiscation of their property as the punishment for violators of the interdict As against such outbursts of intolerance, Saivism, Vaishnavism and Jainism flourished at Kanchi The Saiva ascetics like the Kalamukhas were influential in spite of their fierce bigotry and their disgusting practices like eating from human skulls and swallowing ashes, the Kapalikas and the Pasupatas were similar groups The growing importance of *mathas* is a characteristic feature of the period, and they were concerned with religious teaching Above all, temples became centres of religious and social life, and the Tanjore temple set the model to the whole of the Chola country As landholder, employer and consumer of goods and services, as bank school and museum, as hospital and theatre, in short, as a nucleus which gathered round itself all that was best in the arts of civilised existence and regulated them with the humaneness born of the spirit of *Dharma*, the mediaeval Indian temple has few parallels in the annals of mankind \* There were various seats of Jainism in the country from Trichinopoly to Kanchi,

\* Nilakanta Sastri, *op cit*, II, p 504



and the Jains contributed to Tamil Literature Though Buddhism was not prominent in the Chola Empire, it existed at Negapatam and perhaps at Kanchi

**Education** Besides village schools mass education was carried on by discourses on the epics and the *Puranas* in temples and other places There was ample provision for higher education Besides the organisation of special courses in *Mimamsa* and *Vyakarana*, there were theological colleges in which several subjects were taught by a paid staff to numerous pupils At Ennayiram (South Arcot District) a great Vaishnava centre there were 340 students learning the *Vedas* grammar, *Mimamsa* and *Vedanta*, under 14 teachers according to an inscription of the reign of Rajendra I Both teachers and pupils received a daily allowance of paddy supplemented by a money payment, and the whole institution was maintained from the produce of 45 *velis* of land Another inscription of 1048 at Tribhuvani, near Pondicherry mentions a college of the same type with an endowment of 72 *velis* of land Among the subjects taught were, besides those mentioned in the previous record, the epics and the *Dharmasastra* of Manu and the 260 students and 12 teachers were exempted from service on the committees of the local Assembly A third record of 1067 provides for a college and for a hostel and a hospital attached to it at Tirumukkudal (Chingleput District) the pupils were fed, and supplied with oil for bath on Saturdays and lights for the night, the medical staff consisted of two doctors, two nurses and others, and there were beds for 150 patients the hospital being provided with water from Perambalur (Trichinopoly District) scented with cardamoms and *khas khas* (cuscus) roots Another inscription of 1121 refers to a medical school at Tiruvaduturai (Tanjore District) teaching the *Samhita* of Charaka and the *Ashtangahrdaya Samhita* of the younger Vagbhata

**Literature** The Chola inscriptions give evidence of the literary accomplishments of their composers, and refer to some accounts of Rajaraja I and Kulottunga I which are not extant The *Sevulusinhamani* a great classic of Tamil Literature of Tiruttakkadevar, a Jain probably composed in the tenth century, influenced Kambar The *Kundalakesi*, a fragmentary

Pandya Viceroy, and his construction of a great palace at Madura. But Pandya princes in alliance with Ceylon gave trouble to the successors of Rajendra I, though his establishment of the Chola Pandya Viceroyalty continued till the advent of Kulottunga I. The anarchy during Adhirajendra's reign gave scope for Pandya intransigence, which was put down with a strong hand by Kulottunga I, who changed the system of Pandya administration by Chola princes, established military colonies in the reconquered Pandya country, and exercised no control over its internal administration. During the period of his successors, there was the steady growth of Pandya power, which was however paralysed by the outbreak of civil war about 1169 lasting till about 1177. We have sketched the Pandya wars of Kulottunga III who, in spite of his success down to about 1205, had to succumb to the military might of Maravarman Sundara Pandya about 1216. Thus was ushered into existence the glorious period of Pandya imperialism, which remained intact throughout the thirteenth century.

## SECTION XXV. RELIGION

**Decline of Buddhism** The decline of Buddhism in India during 600—900 proceeded further in this period, 900—1200. Its eclipse by the growing ascendancy of Brahmanism was tempered by its patronage by the Palas of Bengal and Bihar, but their supersession in Bengal by the Senas diminished the Buddhist sphere of activity. Sindh had fallen under Arab rule, but Nepal sheltered Buddhism though in a form mixed up with Saivism. The triumph of Kumarila and Sankara had contributed to its waning popularity, and it suffered severely during the destructive invasion of Bihar by Muhammad bin Bakhtyar in 1197. The monks fled to Nepal and Tibet, and their followers gradually gave up their religion and became Hindus. In South India the increasing strength of Saivism and the growth of Virasivism confined the influence of Buddhism to a few scattered localities.

**Causes** Though Buddhism suffered to some extent from the violence of Pushyamitra Sunga, Mihiragula, Sasanka and Muhammad bin Bakhtyar, the Hun invasions in general

were more injurious to it than a few persecutions here and there during more than thirteen centuries which intervened between the first and last persecutors. But the real decline of Buddhism began in the seventh century in South India and in the eighth century in Northern India. Its collapse under Muslim iconoclasm was the formal stage of its exit from India. The occasional boasts of some religionists should not be treated seriously. Generally we find the great Indian rulers favouring all sects though with different kinds of favour. We come across members of the same royal family practising diverse creeds and some kings marrying queens belonging to different denominations. Even under the Cholas persecution was exceptional. Barring some cases of bigotry and of proverbial zeal exhibited by converts, Indians showed their culture in a field where compromise has been found to be comparatively difficult. If religious toleration is a real criterion of culture, ancient India was the land of culture *par excellence*. Therefore the story of the expulsion of Buddhism from the country of its origin by persecuting bloodhounds is the offspring of a double misconception regarding the lessons of religious history in other lands and the trend of religious progress in India. The disappearance of Buddhism from this country was largely caused by its degeneracy, and it was non-violently superseded by emergent Brahmanism.

Following M. Barth we may unmistakably discover the true cause of the decay of Buddhism in its "sheer exhaustion". The modest, pious and energetic wandering monks of the early days became in course of time fat priests attached to opulent monasteries, and instead of passionately preaching and appealing to the human heart, the later monks indulged in gerund grinding and logic-chopping and in debasing Tantric practices. Scholasticism dried up spiritual energy and the Sangha became steadily isolated from the laity with whom it ceased to have any vital connection. So ultimately lay Buddhists became indifferent to the fortunes of their so-called leaders. As the Sangha had been the heart of Buddhism and the repository of its vitality from the very

Decline  
of the  
Sangha

beginning the decline of the former was tantamount to the decline of the latter. The monastic institutions owing to their prominence became objects of attack by Huns and Muslims and the destruction of *viharas* tenanted by decadent monks meant practically the ruin of their religion. In other words the degeneracy and exclusiveness of the Sangha with its spiritual enthusiasm extinct made its position untenable against the last dose of violence, and its limited lay supporters were indifferent to its fortunes in the last days of its life in India.

The transformation of early Buddhism into Mahayanism added new elements to it and made its appeal wider, but in some respects Neo Buddhism was diametrically opposed to the teachings of the Buddha whose gospel, as a natural reaction against the religious condition of his age supplied a real need. So long as that message was not departed from the position of Buddhism would be impregnable though its appeal would be limited as in the analogous case of Jainism. But changes were made in Buddhism to suit the tastes of its multitudinous and heterogeneous followers so much so that the Buddha himself would have found it difficult to recognise his religion and describe himself as a Buddhist. He recommended a short cut to salvation and envisaged *nirvana* as a near reality whereas Mahayanism treated it as a distant goal to be attained in the long run and practically as an unattainable objective. He emphasised self-effort and regulation of life by a strict ethical code with no dependence on the efforts of others, and discouraged all profitless speculation regarding the fundamentals of metaphysics but Neo Buddhism leaned on the doctrine of transfer of merit, gloried in metaphysics and theology, and sanctioned the vain ceremonies interdicted by the Master and his true and ardent disciple Asoka. Therefore an element of structural instability was introduced by the abandonment of the Buddha's way and the earnest pursuit of a new *vana* (way or path) though the fundamental changes effected made the practically new religion popular and charged it with an expansive force. In course of time it resembled Saivism and Vaishnavism in many respects.

Changes  
Destructive  
of Individuality

In the meantime Brahmanism borrowed a good deal from Buddhism, which consequently became a squeezed orange, as it were and increased its own strength. Its cause was espoused by two men of remarkable ability and vitality, Kumarila and Sankara, the former emphasising the greatness of the Vedic religion and the latter combating the negativist tendency of Buddhism. The epoch of their activity—eighth and ninth centuries—elevated Brahmanism at the expense of Buddhism. After the incorporation in the oldest religion of some of the best features of Buddhism, it found its occupation practically gone. On the eve of the Muslim advent, it was a mere shell untenable against the new storm, and the destruction of the Buddhist edifices of Bihar (the land of V(b)ihara), the murder of the monks and the flight of the survivors to Nepal and Tibet completed the downfall of Buddhism in India. Though violence compassed its disappearance from this country, in reality it died a natural death in the land of its birth.

Buddhism has contributed much to the intellectual, spiritual and social life of India. Its cosmopolitan outlook and foreign propaganda brought this country into contact with the rest of Asia for a long time. In the fields of art, literature, logic and philosophy, its notable achievements have been mentioned in their proper places. In the sphere of religion and social life, besides the doctrine of *ahimsa*, the aversion for animal food and the growing unpopularity of Vedic sacrifices, may be mentioned organised religious propaganda and conversion, monastic life, image worship, temples, festivals and processions, pilgrimages to holy places, and gentleness and charity, as due to Buddhist influence. The University of Nalanda is proof positive of the organising capacity, catholicity of outlook, and passion for learning and sustained intellectual effort characteristic of Buddhism. Emphasis was laid by it on morality, and the status of women was bettered in some respects. A democratic social ideal was preached. No doubt discouragement of surgery, negativism in philosophy, and over-indulgence in hair-splitting argumentation may be counted against Buddhism. But it never pushed *ahimsa* too far as did .

the Jains. The charge that it was the arch emasculator of India is unconvincing as Buddhists during their best period were not cowards. The great victories of Mahmud of Ghazni and Muhammad of Ghor were won over non-Buddhists, and the Arab and Turkish invasions of India synchronised with the marked decline of Buddhism.

• **Fortunes of Jainism** Jainism was patronised by the Paramaras of Malwa and in some parts of Rajputana and in Gujarat under Jayasimha Siddharaja (1094—1144) and particularly under his successor Kumarapala (1144—1173) it attained pre-eminence thanks to Hemachandra the pious and learned Jain monk. In South India the Rashtrakutas continued their support to it but later during the

**Its  
Chequered  
Career**

period of Bijjala's usurpation, the rise of Virasaivism undermined the strength of Jainism.

The Gangas of Talakad remained attached to their creed, and their tradition was continued by the Hoysalas till the conversion of Bittideva to Vaishnavism by Ramanuja. Jainism steadily lost ground in the Tamil country, though not to the extent that Buddhism did. Thus its ascendancy in Gujarat was modified by its chequered career in South India. But its losses were as inconspicuous as its gains had been limited and it never attempted conquest beyond India. Therefore its fortunes were in striking contrast with those of Buddhism. It took root in Gujarat and the Kannada country but its expansion was limited in contradistinc-

**Causes of  
its Limited  
Growth**

tion to the gigantic growth of Buddhism. Its limited growth was due to the exaggerated emphasis it laid on *ahimsa* and asceticism. Its severe discipline could never evoke a wide res-

ponse. Though some changes were introduced into Jainism such as the worship of images and settled life of the monks in monasteries its doctrines remained unchanged from the first century A.D. and particularly after the Council of Valabhi in the fifth century. Such an intensely conservative religion could not be expected to make wide conquests. Again unlike Buddhism, it has not disappeared from India and its permanent place in the religious life of this country is to be accounted for with reference to its closer relations, doctrina-

and historical with Brahmanism than was the case with its rival Buddhism and to its perpetuation of old religious customs and institutions and its adherence to its original position as much as possible so much so that it has continued to serve its ancient purpose without being superseded absolutely by Brahmanism. Above all in contrast with Buddhism its clergy and laity have formed an organic whole and the latter have supported their Church in an admirable manner in times of prosperity and adversity. In spite of its fundamental disagreements with the oldest religion—its atheistic tendency and its philosophy of *syadvada* (may be-ism uncertainty of truth)—it has been to some extent tied to the apron strings of its mother Brahmanism. Besides its contribution to Indian art and philosophy it has enriched Sanskrit and Kannada and in some measure Tamil Literatures. Hemachandra was one of the most prolific authors of ancient India.

**Ascendancy of Brahmanism** The lion's share of royal patronage was enjoyed by Brahmanism whose triumph was due to the exertions of Kumarila and Sankara who took advantage of the decline of Buddhism. Its weapons were dialectics the spiritual energy of dominant personalities and propaganda among the people and princes to secure their support to the oldest religion of the country and its orthodox offshoots. With a few exceptions already recorded the success of Brahmanism was pan Indian. In spite of the emphasis on the infallibility of the *Vedas* sacrifices did not become conspicuous. The Buddhist doctrine of *ahimsa* was inherited by the Vaishnavism who regarded the Buddha as an *avatara* of Vishnu. There was no clash between Vaishnavism and Saivism and both were practised and patronised by the various dynasties of Northern India the individual dynasties professing either according to their proclivities. The Vaishnavism of Bengal gradually developed on peculiar lines and towards the close of our period the ground was being prepared for what Sir R. G. Bhanjalkar calls Kadhakrishnaism or the cowherdess element of Vaishnavism symbolised by the *Gita Govinda* of Jayadeva. Such erotic

elements were not characteristic of South Indian Vaishnavism. The Narayana cult of Ramanuja and the Krishna cult of Pandharpur (Maharashtra) in the thirteenth century represent the purest and best aspects of Vaishnavism, the latter movement regarded Vitthala or Vithoba (Vishnu—Krishna) as the husband of Rukmini, not as the lover of Radha. We have referred to the adherence of the Hoysalas to Vaishnavism from

the reign of Vishnuvardhana. Saivism flourished in the Andhra and Tamil countries, and in the latter showed some intolerance. Virasaivism in the Kannada region was more intolerant. The Saiva sects like the Kalamukhas, addicted to questionable practices, were fierce bigots. But, on the whole, the ascendancy of Brahmanism, in spite of its unsavoury developments in some respects, was established on normal lines of religious progress and the extinction of Buddhism and the diminution in the power and influence of Jainism were not essentially due to persecution or other means *aiming at it*, but to the extraordinary spiritual energy and adaptability produced and exhibited by Brahmanism or *Hinduism*.

## SECTION XXVI SOCIAL LIFE

Regarding the four castes Alberuni in his *Tarikh-i-Hind* (1030) practically brackets the Brahmans and the Kshatriyas on the one hand, and the Vaisyas and the Sudras on the

other, and says that these two groups lived together in towns and villages and in the same houses in spite of their great differences. But this picture may be partly true of the Panjab in which Alberuni lived for a few years. The multitudinous subdivisions of the four main divisions, in imitation of the increasing sub-sections among the Brahmans, constituted the characteristic feature of the social life of the period under survey. The Kayasthas claiming to be Kshatriyas came into prominence as the writer caste and exhibited the same passion for social exclusiveness and sub-division among themselves. The same tendency is shown by the Vaisyas, the Sudras and the untouchables, and it was probably due to the strict prohibition of *anuloma* marriages (*pratiloma* connections had long ago been tabooed), to the growing differences among the people on account of dietetic



girls in temple service, and the tonsure of widows. Some of the developments indicated above exhibiting a narrow and illiberal view of social life, destroyed the solidarity of Hindu society. In other respects social life remained the same as in the previous period.

## SECTION XXVII CULTURE

**Education** We have studied the condition of the University of Nalanda in the seventh century. It was probably patronised by Yasovarman in the eighth century. In the following century it secured the support of Devapala and a Sailendra Emperor of Sumatra. In the tenth and eleventh centuries Gopala II and Mahipala I, favoured Nalanda, and Ramapala and Govindapala in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. But the Palas from the tenth century lived in troublous times and could not have done much for that University. Therefore Devapala must be regarded as the greatest benefactor of Nalanda after Harsha. The famous Professors of the eighth century were Santideva, a Mahayana writer, Santarakshita who was the head of a monastery in Tibet during the last 13 years of his life, Padmasambhava, the founder of Tibetan Lamaism or Tantric Buddhism. Kumarasila, Professor of *Tantra*, who also served in Tibet, and Chandragomin (different from the great grammarian) who wrote much on *Tantric Buddhism* and was well versed in several subjects particularly in *tantra* and logic. Viradeva, appointed by Devapala, belonged to the ninth century. Buddhakirti in the twelfth century was perhaps the last well known Pandit of Nalanda, "the Oxford of Buddhist India,"\* which was destroyed during the conquest of Bihar by Muhammad bin Bakhtyar towards the close of that century.

The University of Vikramasila was founded by Dharmapala (769—815). Its site has not been definitely known, probably it was built on a hill on the southern bank of the Ganges near Colgong (Bhagalpur District, Bihar,) though some would locate it near Nalanda. It was patronised by Jayapala in the eleventh century. In many respects it

\* Waddell *The Buddhism of Tibet or Lamaism* (1934) p 24

resembled Nalanda but its special study was Buddhist Tantrism for which there was some provision in the other University as well. At Vikramasila, there were six Halls and as many Gate keepers (Professors in charge of the Halls). Some of the Pandits belonged to Nepal. But the most shining ornament of the University was Atisa, a Bengali (980—1053). After his studies there he proceeded to Sumatra and mastered the Buddhism of that island, living there for about ten years. On his return home, he was appointed to the headship of his own University by Nayapala. After much persuasion, he accepted the offer to visit Tibet in 1038, and worked for Mahayanism there till his death. He was a man of extensive learning who knew many subjects inside out, but wrote mostly on Buddhist Tantrism. At Vikramasila, besides the six "Gate-Keepers," there were 108 Professors, and a committee of them controlled the University. The title of *Pandita* was awarded to the best pupils. Vikramasila must have shared the fate of Nalanda towards the close of the twelfth century. Gopala I founded the University of Odantapuri (town of Bihar) near Nalanda, in the eighth century, and the University of Jagaddala owed its existence to Ramapala, who established it in the eleventh century at his capital, Ramavati (at the confluence of the Ganges and the Karatoya in Northern Bengal) but it specialised in the worst type of Tantrism. Of the two great centres of learning—Nalanda and Vikramasila—the former alone attained international fame and maintained intact its broad outlook and passionate pursuit of knowledge during a number of centuries. It was a truly noble University in so far as it stood for learning in the widest sense of the term and became the rendezvous of scholars from many countries of Asia from Turkey to Japan.

**Literature - Tenth Century** We have mentioned the literary activity of Rajasekhara at the court of the Gurjara Pratiharas. Another dramatist of Mahipala's court was Kshemesvara whose *Chandakausika* and *Naishadha-nanda* deal with the stories of Visvāmitra and Nala, in the former, his patron is eulogised for his victory over the Kainatakas (Rashtrakutas). Trivikrama Bhatta, the protégé of Indra III Rashtrakuta, composed the *Nala champu* and the

*Madalasa-champu*. We have referred to Venkata Madhava, Venkata the Vedic commentator, who lived in the Chola Empire in the first half of the tenth century. Somadevasuri, a Jain, wrote a valuable *champu*, the *Yasatilaka* in 959 and the *Nityakymrita*, based on the *Arikasastra* of Kautilya, but saturated with moral sentiments, a very interesting work emphasising the incompatibility of the royal and ascetic roles and recommending *Lokāyata* to kings. A second Aryabhata, mentioned by Alberuni, lived about 950, differing in his astronomical views to some extent from his more famous earlier namesake. Bhattotpala commented on the works of Varahamihira, and the commentary on the *Brihajjataka* was done in 966; he also wrote an independent treatise on the *Horasastra*. Towards the close of the tenth century, Dhananjaya, the author of the *Dasarupa* on dramaturgy, was patronised by Munja Paramara.

- **Eleventh Century** Krishnamisra's *Prabodhachandrodaya*, written during the reign of Kirtivarman Chandella, is an allegorical and philosophical drama in which the characters are the various human qualities, intellectual, moral, erotic, etc. It vindicates *Advaita* and inculcates *Vishnubhakti*. In spite of its lack of dramatic power, its high morality and substantial originality led to its wide imitation in later times. Lilasuka composed his devotional popular poem, the *Krishna karnamrita*. We have dealt with Bhoja Paramara as a man of letters. The Kashmirian Kshemendra's *Brihat kathamanjari*, written in 1037, is a book of stories condensing the Prakrit *Brihatkatha* in Sanskrit, and his faithfulness to the original may be surmised. He made summaries of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. In 1066 he produced the *Dasavataracharitra*, dealing with the ten incarnations of Vishnu and reckoning the Buddha as the ninth avatar. His *Nripavali*, a chronicle of kings, is criticised by Kalfhana. The *Samayamatrika* is concerned with courtesans and their profession, the *Kalavilasa* expatiates on human follies and vices, the *Darpadalana* condemns all kinds of

pride, of laymen as well as of saints the *Chaturmargasamgraha* describes the four *purusharthas* or aims of life the *Charucharyasataka* gives the rules of good conduct the *Auchityavichara* and the *Kavikanthabharana* are works on poetics establishing his critical ability He wrote on metre as well He was a prolific author with a moral purpose Somadeva,

**Somadeva** another Kashmirian (different from Somadeva suri), is famous as a poet and story teller who was patronised by Kashmirian kings, his *Kathasaritsagara* written between 1063 and 1081, is truly a repository of rivers of stories intended for the amusement of a princess, the Queen of Ananta, king of Kashmir The *Naiasahasanka-charita* of Padmagupta (1005) is of some value for the history of Sindhuraja Paramara Bilhana the Kashmirian wrote his *Vikramankacharita* before 1083

**Bilhana** He was patronised by the Kalachuris, Karnadeva I of Anhilvad, and chiefly Vikramaditya VI of Kalyani who honoured him with the title of *Vidyapati* His historical epic eulogy is valuable for his third patron's history, and its main outlines are supported by inscriptions His *Karnasundari* is a comedy dealing with the marriage of his patron of Anhilvad with Karnasundari The *Chaura panchastika* is his lyric poem on the joys of clandestine love

**Abhinavagupta** Abhinavagupta (1000) belonged to the *dhvani* school and his *Aloka* is a commentary on the commentary of Anandavardhana He also commented on the *Natyasastra* He was not only a writer on poetics and dramaturgy, but also a philosopher He was an exponent of Kashmirian Saivism closely approaching to the Vedanta philosophy In the first half of the eleventh century

**Kuntaka** Kuntaka expounded *Vakrokti* or figurative speech as the soul of poetry Vynanesvara's *Mitakhshara* the greatest commentary on the *Yajñalkyasmṛiti*, has become authoritative throughout India except in Bengal, like all great commentaries it is practically a work on the model of the original

**Vynanesvara** Chakrapanidatta, a Bengali, commented on the *Saṃhitā* of Charaka and Susruta, and wrote an independent work on curative medicine called *Chikitsasarasamgraha*

**Twelfth Century** The Chahmana Vīgraharaja IV wrote the *Harahala nataka* The *Kiratarjuniya* one of the six plays of Vatsaraja the minister of Paramardi Chandella dramatises

Jayadeva the famous poem of Bharavi The *Prasanna raghata* of Jayadeva the logician (c 1200) is symptomatic of the decline of Sanskrit drama Mankha of Kashmir composed the *Srikanthacharitra* a minor epic poem

\*Mankha on Siva's victory over the Rakshasa Tripura it is valuable for its description of the *Sastra parishad* (assembly of learned men) held at the court of Jayasimha the Lohara king of Kashmir one of his ministers being the brother of the author Sandhyakara Nandin's *Ramapalacharitra* narrates at one and the same time the stories of the epic hero Rama and Ramapala of Bengal by employing words with more than one meaning Dhananjaya produced the *Raghavapandaviya* which may be interpreted as the story of Rama or of the Pandavas The *Naishadha* of

Sri Harsha Sri Harsha (different from Harsha of Thanesar and Kanauj) is regarded by Indian critics as a *Mahakavya* but\*by Western scholars as a minor epic poem Its author displays much ingenuity and cleverness besides vast Sastriac learning He was patronised by Vijayachandria and Jayachandra Gahadavalas He defends *Advaita* in a separate

Jayadeva work Jayadeva (distinct from the dramatist) was one of the five gems of the court of Lakshmanasena of Bengal His *Gita Govinda* is a lyric celebrating Krishna's love for Radha then quarrels and their final reconciliation The erotic sentiments of the poem are interpreted

Kalhana in a spiritual sense by the orthodox We have discussed the *Rajatarangini* of Kalhana the one historian of real merit in Sanskrit Literature \* Hema

Hema chandra the Jain polyhistor (1088—1172) converted Kumarapala of Anhilvad to Jainism and became his chief minister he had been the minister of his predecessor Jayasimha During the last ten years of his life he produced the voluminous story of 63 best Jains including Mahavira with its supplement the didactic *Parisiṣṭaparīyan* which relates the conversion of Chandra

gupta Maurya to Jainism His *Āmarapalācharita* or *Dīpā-  
raya* *lavya* the first 20 cantos in Sanskrit and 8 in Prakrit  
(about 1163), narrates the life of his patron his conversion, his  
pro-Jain policy, etc., and illustrates the rules of Sanskrit and  
Prakrit grammar it is of great value for the history of the  
Solankis of Anhilvad, but its author was too staunch a Jain to  
be a good historian His *Yogasāstra* is a complete and lucid  
exposition of Jain philosophy and asceticism The *Abhidhana-  
chintamāni* is a great lexicon of synonyms, he further com-  
piled, besides a list of botanical terms, a dictionary of  
homonyms He wrote on Sanskrit and Prakrit grammar and  
on logic metre and poetics His *Laghu Arhanniti* condemns  
war, prescribes regulations regarding the ethics of warfare, and  
deals with civil and criminal law, it is a condensation of his  
treatise on the same subject in Prakrit The incomplete  
*Prithvirajavijaya*, composed between 1178 and 1200 (different  
from the work of the Hindi poet Chand), probably by Jaya-

**Jayanatha** natha, a Kashmirian poet, is an account of the  
victories of Prithviraja III Chahamana, who was  
finally overthrown by Muhammad of Ghor The *Kama Sutra*  
of Vatsyayana and the works of some of his predecessors were

**Kokkoka** utilised by Kokkoka in his work on erotics, the  
*Ratirahasya* Mammata and Allata (about 1100)  
in their *Kāyaprakāsa* support the *dhvani* school of poetics

**Mammata  
and Allata** and criticise its opponents Lakshmidhara, the  
minister of Govindachandra Gahadavala, com-  
piled a digest of law, the *Smṛtikalpataru*, and  
this branch of legal literature assumed importance from the  
twelfth century Ramanuja the apostle of Vaishnavism and

**Lakshmi-  
dhara** expounder of *Viśiṣṭādvaita*, combined religion  
and philosophy Born at Srīperumbudur  
(Chingleput District) he studied *Advaita*, but  
gave it up and became the disciple of a Vaishnava teacher

**Ramanuja** at Srīrangam, succeeding him in due course to  
the headship of the Vaishnava sect He com-  
mented on the *Brahma Sūtras* in his *Srībhāṣya* and on the  
*Bhagavad Gītā* in his *Gītābhāṣya* He rejected the doctrine  
of *Māyā* His chief aim, the reconciliation of the doctrines  
of the *Upanishads* the *Bhagavad gītā*, the *Mahābhārata* and  
the *Purāṇas* with his own religion and philosophy, was.

theological rather than philosophical \* Chola persecution drove him into Mysore where he converted the Hoysala Bitti deva, a Jain, to Vaishnavism. Some time after his return to Srirangam he died, probably about the middle of the twelfth century. His influence on the career of Vaishnavism was profound and far reaching, and his place in Indian religious history is unique. Nimbaria, who died about 1162 was devoted to the cult of Krishna and Radha. Though he was born in the Bellary District he lived mostly near Mathura. He commented on the *Brahma Sutras* and advocated the doctrine of *bhedabheda* (lit. "difference without difference"), a compromise between monism and dualism. The lexicographer Kesavayamin enjoyed the patronage of Rajaraja II Chola.

**Bhaskara-  
charya**

Bhaskaracharya's *Siddhantasiromani*, composed in 1150, represents the highest achievement of ancient India in Mathematics and Astronomy.

Some regard him as 'the precursor of Newton in the discovery of the principle of the differential calculus as well as in its applications to astronomical problems and computations.

**Art** The tendency of art critics in the classification of architectural styles is to prefer geographical nomenclature to religious or dynastic labels and three styles are distinguished. **Three Styles** —Northern or *Nagara* (with provincial varieties) Southern or *Dravida* and Central or *Vesara* (Dakhan Hoysala or Mysore discarding the old term Chalukya) the first 'characterised by the bulging steeple with curvilinear vertical ribs, placed over the sanctuary and frequently reproduced on other parts of the building † the second by "a terraced pyramidal tower" and the third combining both characteristics and exhibiting peculiarities distinguishing it from other styles. The sculpture of the age in stone and metal is expressive of Puranic and Tantric ideals glorifying passionless asceticism on the one hand and superhuman power and passion on the other. In so far as it departs from the naturalism and humanism of early Indian art, it is condemned by Western critics but eulogised by some Indian critics as the

\* Macdonell *op cit* p 149

† Smith *Fine Art* pp 114 15

climax of characteristically Hindu art there is however no doubt that its appeal can never be wide or universal

The Brahmanical and Jain temples of the Chandellas at Khajuraho are good examples of the Northern style The

Northern Mahadeva temple is full of sculptures, some of which are of an erotic character At Mahoba have been found some Buddhist images—the Buddha, Tara, etc — assignable to the reign of Kirtivarman We have mentioned Udayaditya Paramara's temples at Udayapur and Un The Jain temples of white marble on Mount Abu in Rajputana "exhibit masses of sculptured decoration of the most marvellous richness and delicacy" \* Pala sculpture is best represented at Nalanda the most famous products being Buddhist bronzes and smooth black slate images, "even the stone sculpture approximates to metal work" † The influence of this school extended to Sumatra and Java Some paintings of the Pala school belonging to the eleventh century have survived, they show that the traditions established by the famous sculptors and painters, Dhiman and Bispalo of the latter half of the ninth century were intact The best and numerous illustrations of the Northern style are found in the Puri District, Orissa Bhubanesvar, Puri and Konarak The Muktesvara temple at Bhubanesvar has been called "the gem of Orissan art" The Jagannatha temple at Puri is a little inferior The Sun temple at Konarak belongs to the thirteenth century, and is "the most renowned achievement of the vigorous Orissan school of architecture" The sculptures in all the three places are famous, and some of them illustrate completely the postures described in erotic works The sculptures of Bhubanesvar of about the tenth century illustrate fashionable ways of dressing the hair (coiffure) which are "so varied and graceful that even the most fashionable cinema stars of Bombay and Calcutta may immensely add to their popularity by imitating some of them" ‡

Most of the temples at Anhilvad were destroyed by Muslims, and the ruins of the Somnath temple are extant, the

\* Smith *ibid* p 127

† Coomaraswamy, *op cit*, p 114

‡ Altekar, *op cit* p 360 and Plate VIII



study by Dutch and French scholars that has been mainly responsible for our knowledge of the great Hindu achievement in Indonesia and Indo-China in the ancient and mediaeval ages "India has laid her mark on all the great Far Eastern countries some of them received from her a substantial part of their religious and artistic culture, and others are indebted to her for their very existence as civilised states Among the latter, Indochina comes foremost .

Ancient Indochina was truly, as far as religious and political institutions are concerned, a daughter of India This daughter, cut off at an early date from her home, has been in the course of centuries forgotten by her mother '\* We shall pursue separately the history down to A D 1200 of

Insulin-  
dia and Indo  
China

Sumatra (Suvarnadvipa) Java (Yavadvipa), Bali, Borneo, Malaya, Siam, Cambodia (Kamboja) and Southern Annam (Champa), the first four con-

stitute Insulin-  
dia and the last four (together with Burma), Indo China, the first three and a large part of the fourth belong to the Dutch today, a part of the fourth and of Malaya to the British and the last two to the French, the sixth being independent, and the first four, though islands now, were once a part of the continent of Asia, according to some scholars The term *Suvarnadvipa* is given a wider denotation by some who take it as synonymous with Malayasia or Insulin-  
dia and Malaya† The inhabitants of Malayasia

Ethnology

before its colonisation by the Hindus were Negritos and the Malays, the latter racial element being predominant The Malay language belongs to a group called Malayo Polynesian or better Austronesian, the Malays originally lived on the borders of China but about 1000 B C were driven into Indo China by the Chinese They migrated to Malayasia about 500 B C But some scholars hold that they are racially connected with the Mundas and other related tribes of India and speak of them as having migrated from India towards the east and south east in consequence of the Dravidian and Aryan invasions of India In other words

\* L. Finot, *Hindu Kingdoms in Indochina The Indian Historical Quarterly* (1925) p 599

† R. C Majumdar *Suvarnadvipa Part I* (1937) p 48

# CHAPTER IX

## INDIAN ENTERPRISE ABROAD

### SECTION I INTRODUCTION

The foundation of Hindu kingdoms in the Indian or Malay Archipelago (East Indies Indonesia or Insulindia) and Indo China is an important chapter in early Indian History. It followed in the wake of peaceful commercial intercourse which contributed not only to the material prosperity of India

**Trade  
Followed by  
the Flag**

but also to the dissemination of her religion and culture and to the amalgamation of Hindus with other races resulting in the development of a composite civilisation with Indian elements dominating for a long time. The establishment of Hindu kingdoms abroad did not give rise to imperial control from India whose colonial expansion was to some extent on the lines characteristic of the ancient Greeks.

Imperialism developed in the new Hindu states but was confined to the colonial zone though occasionally it clashed with Indian and Sinhalese powers. We can speak of Greater India in the sense in which modern historians refer to Greater

Hellas or Greece in the period of classical antiquity. The spread of Indian religion and culture consequent on commercial penetration was accelerated by the growth of political and imperial power, and thus Indian script language (Sanskrit) ideas beliefs customs and manners obtained currency in the lands annexed to civilisation and progress by Hindu merchants missionaries, soldiers and political adventurers.

For about fifteen centuries from about the beginning of the Christian era Indian enterprise effected a great change in the fortunes of

Insulindia and Indo-China and subsequently submitted to the onslaught of Islamic and other powers. Indian civilisation was gradually dominated by other elements and Indian tradition was broken except in Siam and Bali which continue to be largely Indian in culture even today. In the other regions which had been Indian before it is archaeological.

**Dominance  
of Hindu  
Culture**

study by Dutch and French scholars that has been mainly responsible for our knowledge of the great Hindu achievement in Indonesia and Indo China in the ancient and mediaeval ages "India has laid her mark on all the great Far Eastern countries some of them received from her a substantial part of their religious and artistic culture, and others are indebted to her for their very existence as civilised states Among the latter, Indochina comes foremost . . . Ancient Indochina was truly, as far as religious and political institutions are concerned, a daughter of India This daughter, cut off at an early date from her home, has been in the course of centuries forgotten by her mother"\* We shall pursue separately the history down to A D 1200 of

Sumatra (Suvarnadvīpa), Java (Yavadvīpa), Bali, Borneo, Malaya, Siam, Cambodia (Kamboja) and Southern Annam (Champa), the first four constitute Insulindia and the last four (together with Burma), Indo China†, the first three and a large part of the fourth belong to the Dutch today, a part of the fourth and of Malaya to the British, and the last two to the French the sixth being independent, and the first four, though islands now, were once a part of the continent of Asia, according to some scholars The term *Suvarnadvīpa* is given a wider denotation by some who take it as synonymous with Malayasia or Insulindia and Malaya† The inhabitants of Malayasia

**Ethnology** before its colonisation by the Hindus were Negritoes and the Malays, the latter racial element being predominant The Malay language belongs to a group called Malayo Polynesian, or better Austronesian, the Malays originally lived on the borders of China, but about 1000 B C were driven into Indo China by the Chinese They migrated to Malayasia about 500 B C But some scholars hold that they are racially connected with the Mundas and other related tribes of India and speak of them as having migrated from India towards the east and south east in consequence of the Dravidian and Aryan invasions of India In other words,

\* L. Finot, *Hindu Kingdoms in Indochina* The Indian Historical Quarterly (1925), p 599

† R. C Majumdar *Suvarnadvīpa* Part I (1937) p 48

the Hindu colonisation of Malayasia in the last centuries B C was the second stage in Indian colonisation which had started in the pre-historic period. Further the term Malaya is connected with the Indian tribal name Malaya. As regards the civilisation of Malayasia on the eve of the Hindu colonisation, the inhabitants of Java were more civilised than those of the neighbouring regions and islands who were in a primitive phase of culture. *they had made substantial progress in industry and navigation combined with the rudiments of astronomy, though some would add a few more items to this list* )

**Pre-Hindu  
Culture**

## SECTION II SUMATRA

**Early History** Though the largest of the islands of Insulinidia after Borneo Sumatra has now a population of only about 6 millions whereas Java (about one fourth of Sumatra in size) is inhabited by about forty two millions. The history of Sumatra begins with its colonisation by the Hindus in the third or second century B C. The kingdom of Sri Vijaya (Palembang South East Sumatra), though probably existing as an independent political unit from the fourth century A D, became prominent only in the seventh century. Inscriptions of 683, 684 and 686 show that under Sri Jayanasa, a Buddhist,

**Sri Vijaya in  
the Seventh  
Century**

Sri Vijaya was a great political power, which had annexed Malayu (Jambi, Sumatra) and the neighbouring island of Banka and was organising an expedition against Java (686). Itsing the

Chinese pilgrim testifies from his personal knowledge to the political and commercial importance of Sri Vijaya towards the close of the seventh century, and to its fame as a centre of Buddhist learning. He stayed there for six months, studying Sanskrit grammar. He observes 'The Buddhist (Mahayanist) priests number more than 1000 whose minds are bent on learning and good practices. They investigate and study all the subjects that exist just as in the Middle Kingdom (India)'. Dharmapala 'the Vice-Chancellor' of Nalanda, visited Sumatra early in the seventh century. Sri Vijaya held diplomatic relations with China between 695 and 742, if not earlier, and had conquered Malaya by 775.

**The Sailendra Empire.** One inscription from Malaya and two from Java, dated 775, 778 and 782, establish the possession of Malaya, Java and Sumatra by the Buddhist Sailendra dynasty, the last record mentions Indra Sailendra and the others, the name of the dynasty. Therefore, in the last quarter of the eighth century, the Sailendra Empire must have been an accomplished fact. But the origin of that empire and its metropolis are not definitely known. A few scholars think that the ancestral home of the Sailendras was probably Kalinga and that therefore Insulindia came under foreign domination. The capital of the empire

**Theories of its Origin**

is located in Java on the ground that the greatest imperial monument was erected at Barabudur or Borobudur in Java, Malaya is also suggested as the nucleus of that empire. But most scholars hold that the Sumatran Kingdom of Sri Vijaya developed into the Sailendra Empire, which included not only Insulindia but also

**Its Extent**

Malaya and Cambodia, and perhaps Champa for a short time. The Nalanda inscription of Devapala (815—854) of Bengal and Bihar, dated in his last regnal year (854), mentions two Sailendras—Balaputradeva and his father Samaragravira. The extensive and prosperous naval empire continued intact till about the middle of the ninth century, but between 869 and 879 Cambodia and Java became independent. Still the Sailendras continued to be the greatest imperial and commercial power till the end of the tenth century. About 990 the aggressions of Java against them were successful in the beginning but failed finally about 1003. We have seen the amicable and hostile relations between the Cholas and the Sulendras in the first quarter of the eleventh century.

**Relations with the Cholas**

The triumph of the former about 1025 was a great blow to the latter, and the struggle between the two naval empires continued intermittently and indecisively throughout that century. The

existence of the Sailendra Empire with 15 dependencies in the twelfth century is vouched for by Chinese records, and its dismemberment occurred in the following century. As Insulindian studies are now in their infancy, the genealogy and chronology of the Sailendras are in many respects uncertain, and it is from Pala and Chola inscriptions that some-

definite information has been gleaned. In short, we have more theories than facts about the great Indonesian Empire which was in a high state of efficiency from the eighth down to the twelfth century. The Sailendras were Mahayanists, and their patronage of Buddhist religion and learning is clear from their connections with Nalanda and Negapatam and from the fact that Atisa of the Vikramasila University studied Buddhism for about ten years in Sumatra in the eleventh century. Their contributions to art are found in Java and belong to 'the Sumatran period of Javanese history,' and this is one of the surprises of Insulindian research. The identification of Yavadvipa (Java) with Sumatra by a few scholars has added to the incertitudes of the history of Sumatra and Java.

### SECTION III JAVA

**Western Java** Java is the most populous region of Insulindia, famous for the productivity of its soil, and its name Yavadvipa or 'barley island' is significant. The reference to King Devavarman of Java in A.D. 132 in the Chinese records is adequate proof of the Hindu occupation of that island in the second century. Diplomatic relations with China were maintained in the second, third and fifth centuries. Fa-hien, on his way back to China, stayed in Java for five months in 414 and witnessed the dominance of Brahmanism and the insignificance of Buddhism there. But, soon after his departure from Java, Gunavarman, a prince monk of Kashmir, converted the king and his mother to Buddhism and proceeded to China in 424. Some Sanskrit inscriptions near Batavia (Western Java) mention King Purnavarman, his excavation of a canal in his twenty-second regnal year, and his gift of one thousand cows to Brahmans, thus proving the existence of a Brahmanical kingdom in Western Java, and those records may be assigned to the fifth or sixth century. Diplomatic relations with China continued, and Chinese evidence refers to a queen of Java in 675.

**Central Java** A Sanskrit inscription assignable to the seventh century contains the symbols of Siva and Vishnu, and shows the prevalence of Brahmanism in Central Java. In the

The King-  
dom of  
Mataram
 
 eighth century, arose the kingdom of Mataram (Central Java) and King Sanjaya's inscription in Sanskrit, dated Saka 654 (A D 732), describes him as a great conqueror\*. He was a Saiva who installed a *Sivalinga*, and his record invokes Siva Brahma and Vishnu and states that his father ruled like Manu, these details are proof positive of the establishment of Hindu civilisation in Central Java. From his inscription it is inferred that his family must have belonged to South India. Some regard him as the founder of the Sailendra dynasty, but this opinion is not shared by many scholars. An inscription of 760 mentions the temple and stone image of Agastya.

**The Sailendra Period** The period from 778 to 879 witnessed the inclusion of Java in the Sailendra Empire and during that century the Javanese dynasty of Mataram seems to have retired to Eastern Java. Under the Sailendras Java attained greatness and splendour in art. The Siva temples of the Dieng plateau are characterised by a sobriety and dignity which reminds us of the Indian temples of the Gupta period\*. Chandī Kalasāh (temple at Kalasan Central Java) dedicated to the Mahayanist Goddess Tara in 778, is the first Buddhist temple in Java.

Art of  
Borobudur
 
 neighbourhood situated in the Kedu plain (Central Java), belong to the greatest period of Indo Javanese (mostly Indian and partly Javanese) art†. The Borobudur (the many Buddhas, other explanation are given, and the significance of the name is not quite clear) monument which may be assigned to the period, 750—850 is a hill in nine stages (nine terraces), an epic in stone the most wonderful Buddhist *stupa* in the world. It contains about 2 000 bas reliefs or stone pictures two miles long if they are placed continuously side by side illustrating the life of the Buddha as described in the Sanskrit *Lalitavistara*. As the pilgrim ascends the monument he gets the impression of a spiritual ascent, the lower parts are rich in decoration, whereas the upper portions are plain and unadorned, indicative of the Great Nothingness of Buddhist philosophy. Chandī

\* Majumdar *op cit* Part II (1938) p 176

† Majumdar *Ibid* pp 193 206 and 233 41

Mendut near Borobudur contains an image of Avalokitesvara, which challenges comparison with the best Gupta sculpture. Still it is to be remembered that Buddhist art was a parenthesis in the development of Brahmanical art which preceded and followed it in Java. Therefore, though the subject is Buddhist 'as a whole the Pallava and Chola sculpture is nearer to the Javanese work.' Dr A. K. Coomaraswamy observes: 'The rich and gracious forms of these reliefs bespeak an infinitely luxurious rather than a profoundly spiritual or energised experience. There is here no nervous tension, no concentration of force to be compared with that which so impresses the observer at Angkor Wat. Borobudur is like a ripe fruit matured in breathless air, the fullness of its forms is an expression of static wealth, rather than the volume that denotes the outward radiation of power. In the last analysis, Borobudur is a monument of Sailendra culture rather than of Buddhist devotion.' Dr V. A. Smith notes: "A certain uniformity of effeminacy characterises the forms as it does some of the much earlier compositions of Gandhara."†

• **The Restoration Period** The overthrow of the Sailendra supremacy in Java resulted in the restoration of the Saiva dynasty of Sanjaya which continued in Central and Eastern Java till about 927, the last member of it being Wawa. Therefore this dynasty held Central Java from 732 to 927, for nearly two centuries including the period of its subordination to the Sailendras. The restoration period, 879—927, witnessed the erection of many Brahmanical temples, the greatest of them being a group of eight temples at Lara Jonggrang (Prambanan, Central Java), with the largest Siva temple in the centre and others dedicated to Brahma and Vishnu. These edifices on the hill are on the stupendous scale of Borobudur, not far from Prambanan, and their sculptures illustrate the *Ramayana*. "The Prambanan reliefs are if anything superior to those of Borobudur, and certainly more dramatically con-

\* Smith *Fine Art* pp. 159-160, contra Majumdar *ibid.* p. 350.

† *op. cit.* p. 201.

‡ Smith *ibid.* p. 159.



ceived, and the aspect of the shines, despite their rich ornament, is more masculine \*\* Borobudur and Prambanan may be regarded as playing the classical and romantic roles in

**Literature** Indo Javanese art The Restoration Period further saw the beginnings of Old Javanese (called Kavi by older writers) Literature, a Sanskrit lexicon, *Amara-mala*, was translated, and one of the masterpieces, the *Ramayana*, departing in some respects from the original of Valmiki, is assigned to this period, though some would regard the eleventh or thirteenth century as the age of its composition

**Eastern Java** About 927 Eastern Java came under Sindok who ruled over the valley of the Brantas river He was a Saiva, and Tantric Buddhism existed in Java His daughter who followed him on the throne about 947 was a Buddhist Dharmavamsa brought the island of Bali under his authority He pursued an aggressive policy against the Sailendra Empire His initial success about 990 was nullified by his failure about 1003 His reign ended in 1007 with a calamity, the nature of which is not clear He patronised the translation about 996 of the *Mahabharata* into Old Javanese and the composition of a legal treatise named *Sivasasana* His son in law Airlangga (1019—1042) established his power in 1019 after many vicissitudes of fortune and became supreme in Java by 1035 He executed some irrigation works and encouraged trade and commerce During his reign a famous image of Vishnu, supposed to be the portrait of the king himself, was made, and his protegee Kanva wrote the great Old Javanese classic, *Arjunawadana* about 1035 He abdicated in 1042, but continued to exercise royal functions His last act was the division of the kingdom between his two sons Its western portion with its capital at Kadiri (Kediri, Eastern Java) developed into the leading kingdom of Java in the twelfth century Under King Jayavarsha flourished Triguna the author of the *Krishnayana*, dealing with the abduction of Rukmini by Krishna, which was written about 1104 During the reign of Kameswara I (1115—1130), or probably Kameswara II

The Kingdom of Kadiri

(1185), the poem *Smaradahan*, treating of the burning of Cupid by Siva, was composed by Dharmaya. The next ruler (1135—1157) Jayabhaya's protegee Sedah produced in 1157 the great poem *Bharatayuddha*, which was completed by Panuluh. With the defeat of Krtajaya in 1222 the kingdom of Kadiri came to an end, but during the last 50 years of its existence, it was the greatest power in Java, and Bali, Borneo and other eastern islands were subordinate to it. It possessed a respectable navy and was active commercially, and it may be regarded as the precursor of the mighty Javanese Empire of Majapahit, near Kadiri, in the fourteenth century. The twelfth century is a great age in the history of Java, a period of preparation for "the golden age" (fourteenth century). It witnessed the development of "a national Javanese culture, based indeed on the old Indian tradition, but Indonesian in essence, idiomatic in expression, and in the truest sense of the word, original. The Javanese language had become a fitting vehicle of classic epic literature".\* But, in the field of art, there is no conspicuous achievement to record in Eastern Java during the twelfth century. One interesting feature of Javanese social life is that women enjoyed a higher status than in India †

#### SECTION IV BALI AND BORNEO

**Bali.** Bali is a small island with nearly one million inhabitants. It lies to the east of Java, only a narrow sheet of water of about a mile and a half in width separating the two islands. Its people continue to be Hindus, divided into four castes, even today. Its piecemeal annexation to the Dutch East Indies was completed in 1911, though the Dutch paramountcy had been acknowledged by it in 1839. In 1908 the last Hindu prince attempted to assert his independence, even after his failure, he refused to surrender and died sword in hand along with his family. It was the spirit of the people that prevented the triumph of Islam in their tiny home, though much greater powers had succumbed to its onslaught. The early history of Bali is

\* Coomaraswamy, *op cit*, p. 207.

† Majumdar, *Ibid*, p. 12.

unknown, but Chinese records throw some light on Poli (identified with Bali with some probability) in the sixth and seventh centuries. Kaundinya is mentioned as the name of the dynasty ruling over it, and an embassy was sent to China in 518. About 616 the king was a Kshatriya. The diplomatic relations with China were continued. I tsing refers to the prevalence of Buddhism in Bali. Therefore the Hinduisation of Bali must be dated earlier than the seventh century. The stone and copper-plate inscriptions of the island from the eighth century in the Old Balinese language testify to its colonisation directly from India and not by Javanese Hindus. The first historical ruler was Ugrasena, two of whose dates are known—915 and 933. A queen was reigning about 983. After the conquest of Bali by Java towards the close of the tenth century, its culture was influenced by that of its conquerors. Its political subordination continued in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, but it became independent in the thirteenth century after the extinction of the Javanese Kingdom of Kediri.

**Borneo** • Borneo the largest island in Insulinidia is about eight times the size of Java but its population at present is about three millions. It must have been colonised by the Hindus in the early centuries of the Christian era as their civilisation was well established in the island about A D 400, the probable date of the Muara Kaman (Kutei or Kotei District, Eastern Borneo) inscriptions in Sanskrit

**Yupa Inscriptions** on stone sacrificial pillars (*yupas*), which were erected in connection with a *bahusuvarna* by Mulavarman who presented the Brahmins with 20 000 cows. The *yupa* records mentioning him and his father and grandfather, Asvavarman and Kundunga, prove the firm establishment in Borneo of Brahmanism with its characteristic sacrifices. In a cave at Kombeng (Eastern Borneo) have been found the remains of a wooden temple and stone images of Siva and Buddhist gods, probably belonging to the fourth century. The archaeological finds in Western Borneo as well tell the same story of the colonisation of the island directly from India, without the intervention of Java. During the subsequent centuries our knowledge of Borneo is confined to the references in Chinese records to its Hindu civilisation and

According to tradition Kaundinya a Brahman was the first king. About 245 an embassy was sent to an Indian king called Murunda who returned the compliment by sending his representative to Funan. In the fourth century another Kaundinya is said to have improved the moral tone of the kingdom in which Brahmanism and Buddhism prevailed. In the following century Jayavarman (484—514) sent two embassies to China. Towards the close of the sixth century the extensive kingdom of Funan which had been in existence for about 500 years maintaining a navy, was overthrown by the vassal state of Cambodia.

## SECTION VI CAMBODIA

**Dynastic History** Funan and Cambodia were colonised by Hindus at the same time first century A D and the Khmers of Cambodia became gradually Hinduised. The mythical founder of the royal line was Kambu Svayambhuva and his descendants were known as Kambujas. Hence the name Kamboja or Cambodia. Srutavarman is regarded as the first historical king and his successor Sreshthavarman founded Sreshthapura the capital. Rudravarma (about 570) is much eulogised in the inscriptions of Cambodia and his court physicians were two specialists in *Ayurveda* the brothers Brahmadatta and Brahmasimha. Saivism and Vaishnavism made steady progress. It was under Bhavavarman I (about 690) who seized the throne of Cambodia that it became independent and stepped into the place of Funan which had been conquered by his brother Chitrasena. He assumed the title of *Maharajadhiraja* founded a new capital at Bhavapura and patronised Saivism and Vaishnavism. He was devoted to the worship of the *Sivalinga* four of which were erected. Indian literature like the *Ramayana* the *Mahabharata* and the *Puranas* was popularised and recitations of these texts were organised. The conception of Sambhu Vishnu (Harilara) developed. All this shows the rapid progress of Brahmanism in Cambodia. Under the next ruler (604—627) Mahendravarma (known before his accession to the throne as Chitrasena who had overthrown Funan) were established friendly relations with the neighbouring Hindu kingdom of Champa his inscription of

**Buddhism** Still the dominance of the first cult is abundantly clear. The Hinduisation of the indigenous population was a remarkable success. There were also minor Saiva sects like the *Pasupatas*. *Linga* worship was prominent. Gods were named after the kings. Besides the worship of *Haribara* and of the *linga* of *Siva Vishnu Ganapati Parvati* etc. were venerated. There was the custom of offering books and slaves to gods. In connection with *Siva* worship many South Indian works were prevalent in Cambodia. Further inscriptions mention a number of treatises and *sastras* the *Vedas* the *Pamajana* the *Vahabharata* Panini's grammar the *Mahabhashya* *Susruta Samhita* *Vedanta* *Yoga* *Nyaya* the *Arthasastra* and the *Dharmasastra*. In short Hindus and Khmers became one people and a distinctive Indo-Khmer culture developed though the civilisation of India was the predominant partner. Cambodia adopted Hindu ideas political social and cultural though local modifications were inevitable.

## SECTION VII CHAMPA

• **Political History** The kingdom of Champa corresponds to Southern Annam (French Indo-China the name Annam originated in the eleventh and twelfth centuries) to the east of Cambodia and between it and the coast of the South China Sea—the coastal territory south of Hue. The Hindu occupation of the region must have been effected earlier than the second century A D when the first dynasty of Champa was founded by South Indians though a Northern Indian name was given to the colony. The indigenous population the Chams belongs to the Malayo-Polynesian racial group. The first ruler known to history *Sri Mara* started his line about A D 190 the capital of the kingdom was *Inrapura* in the province of *Amaravati* or Northern

Champa. The undated *Vochan* inscription of his successor in Sanskrit and in a script similar to that of *Rudradaman I's* *Girrar* record (A D 150) is assigned to the third century. Hence it is the earliest Sanskrit epigraph in Insulindia and Indo-China the *yupa* inscriptions of *Mulavarman* of Borneo belonging to about A D 400. There were twelve Indian dynasties.

ruling over Champa. The first dynasty established Hindu civilisation in the country of the Chams, and the Vochar inscription is generally treated as a Hindu record, though some scholars\* would regard it as a Buddhist document on the ground that the sentiments expressed in it are like those of Asoka. He said (the following) words beneficial to the people in the midst of his own kinsmen, after having satisfied his sons, brothers and kinsmen by enjoying wealth in common with them whatever silver, gold, movable and immovable property and stores that I possess, all that I consecrate to those who are dear and near to me.† About 340, in consequence of usurpation, the second dynasty was established, and Bhadravarman (380—413) assumed the title of Dharma Maharaja, patronised Saivism, and built at Mison a temple to Siva named Bhadresvara after him. His son Gangaraja is recorded to have gone to Northern India and enjoyed the sight of the Ganges, "perhaps the only instance in which we find an Indian colonist professing the Brahmanical faith going to India on a holy pilgrimage."‡ His abdication led to the change of succession, and during the period of the third dynasty (420—528) there were troubles from China. Rudravarman I the first member of the fourth dynasty (529—757), is described as a Brahma Kshatriya. His son and successor, Sambhuvarman, fled in consequence of an invasion by the Chinese who are said to have carried away 1350 Buddhist works. On the withdrawal of the latter, he returned to his kingdom and restored the Bhadresvara temple which had suffered from fire during his father's reign. The fifth dynasty ruled from 758 to 859, its capital was Virapura in the province of Panduranga or Southern Champa. The Sailendras raided the coast of Champa between 774 and 787, plundering and destroying temples but the rulers of Champa soon recovered from the blow and continued their temple-building activities. Images of Siva, Sankara Narayana, Ganapati and Bhagavati were installed. Indravarman II of the sixth dynasty (860—900) with his capital at Indrapura, worshipped the Buddha. his inscription of Saka 797 (A D 875) records

\* Ellis, *op. cit.* I p. LVIII, III, pp. 103 and 138-39.

† Majumdar *Champa* (1927) Book III pp. 2-3.

‡ Bose *The Indian Colony of Champa*, p. 40.

his foundation of a Buddhist monastery. His son Javasmitha Haravarman I and his general Sivacharya patro- nised Saivism. Haravarman of the seventh dynasty (900—986) was a student of the Six Systems of Hindu Philosophy and of grammar. Hindu and Buddhist. He was devoted to the cult of Bhagavati, whose majestic image erected by him was removed to Cambodia by Rajendrarajan in 945. The Annamites plundered and destroyed Indrapura the capital of Champa in 982. The eighth dynasty (989—1044) was founded by the usurper Indravarman V (989—999) whose capital was Vijaya in the province of the same name or Central Champa. His successor transferred the capital to Indrapura in 999. In 1044 there was another Annamite invasion which resulted in the extinction of the eighth dynasty. The first member of the next dynasty (1044—1074) suppressed the rebellion of Southern Champa in 1050. During the reign of Rudrarajan III (1061—1074) there was a third Annamite invasion in 1069 and Champa was reduced to anarchy. Harivarman III of the tenth dynasty (1074—1139) defeated the Annamites and the Cambodians and rehabilitated the kingdom of Champa and its capital Indrapura. His death in 1080 was followed by the self immolation of four of his queens and the disruption of the kingdom consequent on the accession to the throne of a boy prince Jaya Indravarman III (1139—1144) of the eleventh dynasty was a worshipper of the Buddha Siva and Vishnu and his war with Cambodia ended in his death. During the period of the twelfth dynasty (1149—1318) Champa was decisively defeated and partitioned by Cambodia in 1192 and completely annexed in 1203. Though it became independent in 1220 it suffered from the attacks of the Mongols between 1278 and 1285 and ultimately succumbed to the Annamites in 1318.

**Religion and Culture** The Varmans of Champa (divided into three provinces—Amaravati, Vijaya and Panduranga) ruled for more than 1000 years. The Chams became Hinduised and Champa was substantially transformed into a Hindu country not only in religion and culture but also in customs and manners. In most respects the process of

transformation may be likened to that undergone by Cambodia. Sivism was the dominant creed, but there was no conflict between it and Vaishnavism, and Buddhism occupied a subordinate position. The four Hindu castes prevailed, and their rigidity was tempered by inter caste marriages, particularly between Brahmans and Kshatriyas. But Hindu ideas could not overcome the Cham class system and the matriarchal law of inheritance. Various branches of Sanskrit Literature were cultivated. We have mentioned the *Shaddarsanas* or Six Systems of Philosophy, and grammar, Hindu and Buddhist. References are found in Champa inscriptions to the 64 *kalatidyas* (fine arts), astrology, *Dharmasastras* of Narada and Bhargava, *Puranartha* (dynastic annals), and stories of the Indian epics. The art of Champa is inferior to that of Cambodia or Java. In connection with the images of Siva, the popular form was the *linga* of the ordinary type, though the *mukhalinga* and Nataraja types are found in Champa. The Bhagavati cult enjoyed much popularity. A few good images of Vishnu and the Buddha were produced, and Ganapati does not seem to have been a favourite god. "Though good imitators, they (the artists of Champa) were not creative artists, so that their productions became inferior in quality and lacked expressiveness and gracefulness."

#### SECTION VIII INDIA'S INTELLECTUAL SOVEREIGNTY

We have seen the influence of India on Western Asia and Europe. Though it was not great on ancient Egypt, Christian monasticism was modified by it to some extent. Heterodox Christianity benefited even more, and most of all Neo Platonism. The Sufis of Arabia and Persia imbibed the Vedantist teaching. But Indian influence did not touch the roots of European civilisation, and Zoroastrianism and Islam were opposed to the infiltration of Hindu ideas in Persia and Arabia. Thus in Western Asia and Europe it was 'sporadic and exotic'. But in Eastern Asia the influence of India has been notable in extent, strength and duration. "In South Eastern Asia, insular and continental, India's cultural role was predominant, similarly in Ceylon, Burma

\* *Loc. Ibid.*, p. 247

† *Plot of cr.*, I, 1, VII



and Tibet and in the last country the Mongols came into contact with Indian civilisation. In China, Korea and Japan, Indian cultural influence appears as a layer superimposed on Chinese culture yet not a mere veneer. In these regions Chinese ethics, literature and art form the major part of intellectual life. But in all, especially in Japan, the influence of Buddhism has been profound and penetrating. Buddhism gave them a creed acceptable in different forms to superstitious, emotional and metaphysical minds; it provided subjects and models for art, especially for painting and entered into popular life, thought and language. \* We have surveyed India's political and intellectual dominance from Sumatra to Champa and we shall now sketch the history of Ceylon and take a bird's-eye view of the annals of Indian culture in Burma, Tibet, Central Asia, China, Korea and Japan. The great part played by India in the acculturation of Eastern Asia from Afghanistan to Japan and from Mongolia to Java and Ceylon is unquestionable.

## SECTION IX CEYLON

Ceylon is known as Lanka and Simhaladvīpa in Sanskrit, Tambapanni and Sihladīpa in Pali, Ilam in Tamil, Taprobane in Greek and Serendib in Arabic. We may dismiss the alleged visits of the epic hero Rama and the Buddha to Ceylon as purely legendary and regard the story of Vijaya, the first king according to the Ceylonese chronicles, as the traditional account of the spread of Aryan civilisation from Northern India resulting in the amalgamation of the Aryans with the indigenous people called the Yakkas. The Sinhalese language is related to Pali and the earliest script of Ceylon is derived from the Brahmi script. Vijaya may be assigned to the fifth century B.C. though tradition makes him contemporary with the Buddha and the foundation of Anuradhapura to the fourth century. The first historical ruler was Devanampiya Tissa (247—207 B.C.) the contemporary of Asoka who became a Buddhist thanks to the mission despatched to Ceylon by the latter, built

the Mahavihara monastery at his capital Anuradhapura and a *stupa* there over the right collar bone of the Buddha and planted a branch of the Bodhi tree (brought from Bodhi Gaya) at the capital where it has grown into the oldest authenticated tree in the world now existing \* The conversion of Tissa was followed by the popularity of Buddhism in Ceylon. During the second century B C the period of Elara's (Tamil) usurpation was characterised by good administration. It was

Duttha and  
Vatta-gama  
nis

put an end to by Dutthagamani (101—77 B C), whose national policy ensured the independence of Ceylon and the revival of Buddhism symbolised by the erection of two big *stupas*. The

reign of Vattagamani witnessed the occupation of Anuradhapura by the Tamils from whom the capital was soon recovered by the king who erected the Abhayagiri *stupa* there. The next

Gajabahu I great ruler was Gajabahu I (second century A D) the contemporary of Senguttuvan Chera

he looms large in tradition and is said to have befriended the Cheras and exacted reparation from the Cholas for the harm they had inflicted on Ceylon during the reign of Karikala Chola. Mahasena (fourth century) built *stupas* and monasteries and became famous for his activities in connection with irrigation and the period from the fourth century to the sixth is regarded as a great tank building age. His son Megha-

Meghavarna varna (352—379) established friendly relations with Samudragupta and received the Tooth

Relic of the Buddha from Halinga. The next ruler Buddhadasa is said to have provided one physician for every unit of ten villages and composed a medical work in Sanskrit the *Sararthasangraha*. The fifth century is noted for the visits of Fa-hien and Buddhaghosha to Ceylon and the latter stabilised Hinayanism in the island. To the close of that century belong the paintings of Sigiriya (Lion hill near Polonnaruwa) characterised by a penetrating sensuality in good condition now in spite of exposure to the open air during more than thirteen and a half centuries a reflection of the Gupta artistic achievement. Foreigners resided at Anuradhapura and Roman coins of the fourth century are found not only

\* H W Codrington, *A Short History of Ceylon* (1929) p 14

on the coast but also at Sigiriya. The general prosperity of Ceylon during the first five centuries of the Christian era is clear.

During the sixth seventh and eighth centuries Ceylon was disturbed by civil wars. Simhavishnu Pallava claims to have conquered Ceylon and Narasimhavarman I 9th and 10th Centuries Pallava restored Manavarma to the Sinhalese throne. During the reign of Sena I who ascended the throne about 820 Anuradhapura was sacked by the Pandyas but the tables were turned against them and their own country invaded by the Ceylonese ruler, Sena II, who sacked Madura. From this time Polonnaruwa (south east of Anuradhapura) became the capital. About 920 Rajasimha II Pandya took refuge in Ceylon after the conquest of Madura by Parantaka I Chola who invaded Ceylon but failed to achieve his objective of seizing the Pandya crown jewels. About 959 the Chola general was defeated and killed—"the last success of the Sinhalese for many a long year". With regard to the ninth and tenth centuries it may be said that on the whole the general impression left on the mind is one of prosperity, perhaps more solid than that of the superficially more brilliant reign of Parakramabahu I.†

Rajaraja I Chola's annexation of Northern Ceylon including Polonnaruwa was implemented by the crowning triumph in 1018 of his son and successor, Rajendra I, who seized the paraphernalia of Pandya royalty which had been in the keeping of the Ceylon ruler, Mahinda V. This period of Chola rule in Ceylon witnessed the erection of many Saiva and Vaishnava temples, the exhibition of the mailed fist in the maintenance of that rule in spite of attempts to liberate the island was characteristic of the policy of Rajadhiraja I and Virarajendra I. Vijayabahu (1056—1111) took advantage of the Chola anarchy before the accession of Kulottunga I, captured Polonnaruwa about 1070 crowned himself king of Ceylon in 1073, and became independent of the Cholas. Kulottunga I made peace with him in 1088. Vijayabahu revived Buddhism with

\* Collington op cit. pp 32-40

† *Ibid* p 42

the aid of monks from Pegu and housed the Tooth Relic of the Buddha at the capital Parakramabahu I or the Great (1153—1186) overcame the internal troubles consequent on the death of Vijayabahu and ruled over the whole of Ceylon. In 1165 he came into conflict with the king of Pegu in connection with the elephant trade and sent a naval punitive expedition on account of the forcible detention in Pegu of a Ceylonese princess on her way to Cambodia. He interfered in the Pandya civil war which broke out about 1169. His general, Lanka-pura, triumphed in the beginning but ultimately came to grief. There were further Ceylonese interventions in Pandya affairs and clashes with the Cholas to whom Parakramabahu gave a lot of trouble. He did much for religion: he created harmony among warring sects, purified Buddhism, and built many *stupas* and monasteries. He strengthened the defences of Polonnaruwa and beautified it with palaces and gardens. His canals and tanks increased the irrigation facilities of Ceylon. Though his wars and buildings depleted the treasury and necessitated heavy taxation, his glorious reign saw the zenith of Sinhalese greatness.\* Though there is some doubt about its identity, his statue 11½ feet in height, 'one of the finest sculptures in Ceylon' represents a dignified bearded sage reading from a palm leaf book.† Nissankamalla (1187—1196) and Kulottunga III Chola claim victories over each other, but the former seems to have been in possession of Ramesvaram for some time and claims to have invaded the Pandya country thrice. He appropriates to himself some of the achievements of his predecessor Parakramabahu the Great, but there is no doubt that he deserves credit for some public works. His death was followed by internal troubles and political confusion. It is to be noted that 1200 is the first definitely fixed date in Ceylon history.‡

Though Ceylon was a political dependency of South India only for short periods, except during the eleventh century, it was throughout a cultural appendage of India: it was subject to Indian influence from age to

\* Colington *op cit*, p. 64      † Coomaraswamy *op cit* pp. 161-62  
 ‡ Colington *op cit* p. 67

age. We have mentioned the buildings, paintings and other works of art. The metal image of Pattinidevi (Chaste Goddess), reminding us of the days of Senguttuvan Cera and Gajabahu I, compares well in aesthetic value with the Indian Sultanganj Buddha and is far superior to the 12th century sculptures (of Ceylon). The drapery, below the waist, is very sensitively realised, the material clinging closely to the limbs in Gupta style. \* This sculpture is conjecturally assigned to the tenth century. The copper images of Hindu gods and goddesses, Saiva and Vaishnava, and of Tamil saints like Appar, Sundarar, Sambandar and Manikkavasagar, are worthy of note. "some of the Saiva saints are superior to any South Indian examples, but all the figures are in Dravidian style." † These have been found at Polonnaruwa, and are assignable to the period before 1300.

### SECTION X BURMA

The Pyus and other Tibeto Burman tribes of the Mongolian race were in occupation of Upper Burma and the Mons or Talaings, a branch of the Mon Khmers, in Lower Burma, about 500 B.C. Other elements like the Shans, allied to the Thai of Siam, contributed later to the racial composition of the Burmese. By about the first century A.D. Indian colonies or influence had been established at Tagaung, Prome and Thaton, i.e., throughout Burma. By the fifth century the last two places had become great centres of Saivism, Vaishnavism, and Buddhism, Mahayana and Hinayana.

This Indian influence came to Burma from Northern India overland and from South India by sea. In that century Buddhaghosha visited Thaton and strengthened Hinayanism. In the eighth century the Vikrama dynasty ruled over Prome, whose fall early in the next century was followed by the foundation in 849 of Pagan near the junction of the Irrawaddy and the Chindwin. The dynasty founded by Anawrahta lasted from 1044 to 1287, when Pagan was destroyed by Kublai Khan. This dynasty of temple builders made Burma a united kingdom, established Hinayanism, "one of the purest faiths mankind

\* † Coomaraswamy, *op cit.*, p. 167

has ever known,"\* and contributed to the artistic glory of Pagan. More than 5000 *pagodas* or temples can be counted from their ruins today. Most of them are brick edifices and some of them are famous for their sculptures and wall paintings, illustrating the life of the Buddha and revealing extensive Indian influence, which however declined from the thirteenth century.

## SECTION XI TIBET

**Introduction of Buddhism** Till the seventh century A D the people of Tibet lived in the pre historic stage of civilisation and were "rapacious savages and reputed cannibals, without a written language and followers of an animistic and devil-dancing or Shamanist religion, the Bon, resembling in many ways the Taoism of China."† In that century King Sron Tsan Gampo introduced Buddhism into his country, and the Tibetan language was made a written one. His Chinese and Nepalese queens were Buddhists who contributed to the conversion of their royal husband. After his death about 650 Buddhism met with local opposition for nearly a century. King Detsan, acting according to the advice of his

**Lamaism** preceptor Santarakshita invited Padmasambhava, both connected with the University of Nalanda, to Tibet in 747, with the result that Lamaism was established—"a priestly mixture of Saivite mysticism, magic and Indo-Tibetan demonolatry, overlaid by a thin varnish of Mahayana Buddhism."‡ Padmasambhava receives worship today in Tibet as the second Buddha. In the latter half of the ninth century King Ralpachan, "the Augustus of Tibet," appointed a number of Indians and Tibetans to translate the Buddhist scriptures and the works of Nagarjuna and other writers into Tibetan, and initiated the system of recording public events chronologically. Atisa, "the Vice Chancellor" of the Vikramasila University, proceeded to Tibet in 1038 after repeated invitation, reformed Lamaism, and watched its progress till his death in 1053. Though some of

\* G E Harvey, *History of Burma* (1925) p 70

† Waddell *op cit* p 19

‡ *Ibid* p 30

the characteristic features of Lamaism developed later, like the theory of successive incarnations of the Grand Lama in the fifteenth century prayer wheels and the *mantra*, 'Om mani padme hum, seem to have originated soon after the introduction of Buddhism into

#### Prayer Wheels

Tibet The use of prayer machines or barrels containing written prayers like "Om mani and turned round by people with the hand and in other ways like placing them in rivers to be turned by the current is a conspicuous feature of Tibetan religious life. The *mantra* is differently interpreted as "the jewel in the lotus, or as an invocation to the Goddess Manipadma some perceiving Manichaean influence in it. Though Lamaism or Tantric Buddhism was borrowed from India, it underwent peculiar transformations in Tibet. "The extra-

Tibetan Art ordinary figures of raging fiends which fill Tibetan shrines suggest at first that the artists simply borrowed and made more horrible the least civilised fancies of Indian sculpture, yet the majesty of Tibetan architecture gives another impression. The simplicity of its lines and the solid, spacious walls unadorned by carving recall Egypt rather than India. \*

### SECTION XII CENTRAL ASIA

Central Asia includes the basins of the Oxus and the Tarim, and the latter region called Chinese Turkistan, now mostly a desert containing a few oases, was in ancient times "a receiving and distributing centre of religion and culture. The discovery of the Bower Manuscript of Sanskrit medical texts in Gupta script in 1891 near Kucha (fourth or fifth century A. D.) gave a stimulus to archaeological exploration, besides many prescriptions for prolonging life given by the Buddhist author of that work, the high medicinal value of garlic is stressed, and the medical authors quoted are Bheda, Susruta, etc. In 1892 was discovered near Khotan by the French archaeological mission a Prakrit version of the *Dhammapadam* in the Kharoshthi script,

assignable to the second century A D Regular exploration was initiated by Sir A Stein on behalf of the Government of India Three expeditions were led by him in 1900—1, 1906—8, and 1913—16 In the meantime, the other archaeological missions, German, Russian, Japanese and French had also been working in the same region The Manuscripts and inscriptions discovered are in twelve languages, including

**The Finds** two new languages, one being the language of the Sakas and the other called Tokharian in two dialects, prevailing at Kucha and Turfan,—a language having closer affinities with Greek and Latin than with the Indo-Iranian languages The materials are palm leaves, birch bark, wooden and bamboo tablets leather and paper Besides Buddhist canonical literature have been obtained fragments of Sanskrit grammatical and dramatic literature including the *Sariputra-prakarana* of Asvaghosha, assignable to the age of Kanishka Some of the monuments unearthed are Buddhist *stupas*, monasteries, caves with wall paintings, and other paintings on silk paper Central Asian art reveals the influence of Gandhara and India The chief centres of culture were Kashgar, Kucha, Turfan Khotan

**Centres of Culture** (Sanskrit Kustana or breast of the earth) and Miran Kumarajiva of Kucha, a Hinayanist and 'an encyclopaedia of Indian learning,' was the son of an Indian immigrant Completing his studies in Kashmir, he returned to Kucha, became a Mahayanist, and was taken prisoner in 383 to China, where he was made Director of Education and did splendid work as a translator He was a repository of Vedic and Sastric learning, and his career shows that China came into intellectual contact with India through Central Asia Hinayanism and Mahayanism flourished in Central Asia in close contact with Zoroastrianism and Christianity

### SECTION XIII CHINA

Though Buddhism was introduced into China in the first century A D, it became prominent there two centuries later In the fourth century, Kumarajiva of Kucha worked hard in China in an official capacity, and he is credited with



3 000 disciples and 50 extant translations Early in the fifth century (424), Gunavarman of Kashmir proceeded to China from Java and served Buddhism there by his paintings and translations In the latter half of that century Buddhist art developed in 471 a colossal image of the Buddha was made The Emperor Wu Ti (502—549) ' the

The Asoka  
of China

Asoka of China in the sincerity of his Buddhist convictions, issued an edict prohibiting

animal slaughter He donned monastic robes thrice and lived the life of a monk, eschewing meat and discoursing on the Buddhist scriptures About 520 he received Bodhi dharma the Indian monk, who emphasised *dhyana* or meditation and waxed eloquent on the futility of reading the sacred books translating them, and building temples, but the emperor was disappointed His mission to Magadha in 539 came back in 546 with a large number of manuscripts and with Paramartha the biographer\* of Vasubandhu, who translated them in twenty years Under the Tang (620—907) and Sung (960—1127) dynasties, Chinese

Indian  
Cultural In  
fluence

art literature and philosophy were influenced by Buddhism particularly landscape painting during the period of the latter dynasty, by the contemplative school founded by Bodhidharma

" Buddhism not only provided subjects like the death of the Buddha and Kuan Yin the Goddess of Mercy, which hold in Chinese art the same place as the crucifixion and the Madonna in Europe and generation after generation have stimulated the noblest efforts of the best painters It also offered a creed and ideals suited to the artistic temperament peace and beauty reigned in its monasteries its doctrine that life is one and continuous is reflected in that love of nature that sympathetic understanding of plants and animals that intimate union of sentiment with landscape which marks the best Chinese pictures \* The great thinker, Chu Hsi (1130—1200) who commented on the works of Confucius accepted to some extent the doctrine of karma, and was influenced by other Indian ideas though he was the expounder of

c

Neo Confucianism The *Tripitaka* was printed in 972 with a preface by the emperor The encyclopaedic Chinese *Tripitaka* represents eight schools of Buddhism and includes texts on the Sankhya and Vaisheshika philosophies and even lexicographical works whose originals in some cases cannot be traced in India

#### SECTION XIV. KOREA

Buddhism entered Korea towards the end of the fourth century. About 450 the doctrine of the *triratna* was established throughout the kingdom, and by the middle of the next century an ecclesiastical organisation had come into existence, and a king and a queen had donned monastic robes Buddhism flourished in Korea from the sixth to tenth centuries In 538 a king of Korea sent a statue of the Buddha and some Buddhist books to the emperor of Japan in order to secure his friendship and alliance with the following message "Buddha dharma, the most excellent of all laws which brings immeasurable benefit to its believers had been accepted in all lands lying between India and Korea

#### SECTION XV JAPAN

Shotoku (593—622), 'the Constantine of Japan,' made Buddhism the state religion, secured the services of Korean monks to teach astronomy and medicine to his subjects, and sent Japanese students to China to learn Buddhism Bodhisena, an Indian monk, described as "the Brahman Bishop of Japan," proceeded there from Champa and laboured hard from 736 to 760 During that century Buddhism became firmly established throughout the country Japanese art and philosophy developed under Buddhist influence Many sects came into existence in the ninth century, most of them being Mahayanist Ultimately the old animistic religion Shintoism became transformed, and the old gods were treated as incarnations of the Buddha "The external influence of Indian thought created a theology and forms of art

resembling those of India the more fundamentally stimulating influence of a method acting inwardly enabled the Japanese genius to realise itself in an attitude of aesthetic appreciation of natural beauty and an art which bear no evident resemblance to anything Indian \* .

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